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序

中国是伦理思想的富国,先贤对道德人生的探讨源远流长,其理论和信念也曾颇为有效地维系了一个人口众多的政治社会共同体的延续和发展。现代意义上的伦理学学科史则只有一百余年的历史,这个时间虽然比起前面几千年的中国伦理思想的历史要短得多,其影响却几乎笼罩了今天我们的伦理学探讨:我们今天所使用的伦理学主要概念、术语以及习惯性的思维,大都是从西方来的。

近处的东西容易挡住远处的东西,即使这近处的东西较小。如果我们不意识到这一点,它就会像一副眼罩一样,遮蔽许多有意义的东西。但如果我们有反省精神,则我们还是可以使之变成一副眼镜,我们还是有可能透过它看到许多远处的东西,而同时又为现在的生活提供一个恰当的视点,因为我们毕竟又不是生活在别处而就是生活在此地,不是生活在过去而就是生活在现在。

所以,引进一些原文的西方伦理学教材是有意义的,它可以帮助我们更清晰和准确地把握和理解西方伦理学的概念和观点,了解其丰富的多义性以至歧义性,乃至其后面的社会历史蕴含。这样,也就可以更好地观照处在现代社会、包括也同样遇到现代性的困境的我们自己的生活。同时,通过一种专业来训练自己的英语,也不失为一种学习的好办法。

《伦理学 理论和当代论争》一书作为伦理学的通论性读物,对伦理学的经典理论和当代具有争议性的道德问题做出了比较清晰、公允的说明。它分为两部分,第一部分是对伦理学理论的探究,包括了功利主义、康德的道德理论、自然法、自然权利、美德伦理学和女性主义的思考,基本涵盖了当代西方伦理学的主要理论观点,为探讨具体的道德实践问题奠定了必要的概念基础;第二部分集中于对道德问题的关注,包括人的问题、社会问题和全球性问题,对伦理学的应用层面给出了比较有意思的介绍。

这本书的引介对中国学生可能具有的吸引力有以下几个方面:

援每一章后面都提供了可检索的网上资源。

圆援在讲述理论问题的时候,节选了相关的原著,篇幅不长,且附有引导性问题,相对于只重概述和评价的国内教材来说,是一个重要的优点。

猿援每章之后附有讨论题和参考书目,这对开展课堂讨论和引发学习者进一步的阅读是有利的。

源援对伦理学的历史给出了框架性的说明。

缘援在讲述当代论争的这一部分,给出的事例具有较强的时效性,容易引起读者的切身关注。

远援书末附有“如何写一篇伦理学论文”的说明,讨论了论文的规范和写法,具有一定操作性。

可以说,这本书作为伦理学的入门读物,无论是在课堂上使用还是自学都是比较适宜的,它基本不需要多少背景知识即可进入,而且英文流畅易懂,阅读上的障碍也比较少。

当然 ,它对伦理学理论的介绍基本是概要式的、对论题的挖掘也还不可能太深入 ,而且由于它兼顾理论和实践 ,如果想对理论问题、或者想对应用伦理学有全面而深入的了解 ,这本书所能提供的帮助就有一定的局限 ,但总的看 ,它还是一本不错的结合理论与应用、共识与争议的伦理学入门书。我们希望在今后还能给读者继续提供一些侧重理论或者主要讲应用的原版教材 ,同时 ,我们还希望读者能由这本书得到启发和线索 ,再读几本西方伦理学的经典原著。

何怀宏

Ethics

Theory and Contemporary Issues

Barbara MacKinnon

The University of San Francisco

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placing figures mentioned in this text into an historical context, it should be useful.

Gender and Racial Concerns. Although this is primarily a general ethics text, it does make extra effort to include writings from female authors in the reading selections as well as in the bibliographies. Moreover, in addition to the chapter on feminist ethics, feminist issues are also treated throughout the text. These include questions of sex equality and sexual harassment, abortion, pornography, ecofeminism, and gender discrimination in the developing world. Racial concerns are stressed not only in the chapter on discrimination, but also in the chapter on economic justice and throughout the text, where possible.

International Concerns. These issues are now integrated into the various chapters of the text, especially Chapter 16 ("War, Terrorism, and Violence") and Chapter 12 ("Economic Justice"). However, international issue also are raised, for example, in the chapters "Equality and Discrimination" and "Legal Punishment." Among the topics are sustainable development, rich and poor nations, international terrorism, war and military conflict, gender inequities, and conflicts over rights. Students are thereby directed to consider the ways in which ethics also applies in this broader context.

IN SUMMARY

Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues continues to be the most comprehensive ethics text available. It combines theory and issues, text, and readings. It aims to be flexible, user-friendly, current, pedagogically helpful, and balanced.

- It is flexible by allowing instructors to emphasize the theory or issues or the textual material or readings as they choose.
- It is user-friendly while at the same time philosophically reliable. This book is not "pop ethics." You cannot do that and at the same time be philosophically accurate and adequate. On the other hand, it uses many pedagogical aids throughout and at the end of each chapter. This text often provides examples and up-to-

date newsworthy events. I ask stimulating questions throughout the textual presentations. I give diagrams wherever I think they will help. I provide helpful headings.

- The book is current not only on day-to-day developments that are in the news and in scientific data, but also on the issues as they are discussed by philosophers.
- It is pedagogically helpful by including several teaching aids that amplify its teachability.
- It is balanced in its collection of readings, including both the ethical theories and contemporary sources on the issues.

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I wish to thank the many reviewers of this text, including: Robert Hollinger of Iowa State University, Paulette Kidder of Seattle University, Jack Green Musselman of Holyoke College, John Stillwell of the University of Texas at Dallas, and James Stuart of Bowling Green State University. Many of their helpful suggestions have been incorporated into this third edition.

The students in my classes at the University of San Francisco over the years also have contributed greatly to this text, by challenging me to keep up with the times and to make things more clear and more interesting. I wish also to thank them here.

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Barbara MacKinnon
University of San Francisco

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PREFACE

For Edward, Jennifer, and Kathleen

This third edition of *Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues* retains the basic elements of the first and second editions, but it also has significant changes. It retains the basic two-part structure of both ethical theory in Part I and contemporary practical issues in Part II. It also continues the combination of text and readings. The substance of the ethical analysis in the text section of individual chapters remains basically the same. In this, it not only remains a comprehensive introduction to ethics but also continues to emphasize pedagogy with examples that interest students and various study guides that help them.

ADDITIONS AND CHANGES

Although the basic elements remain the same, this edition makes the following additions and changes:

- New sections on "Ethics and Religion" and "Ethical Reasoning and Argument" are included in Chapter 1.
- The chapter on the environment has been expanded to include the discussion of sustainable development from the former "Global Issues" chapter.
- International concerns from the former "Global Issues" chapter have been included in the chapter on "Economic Justice."
- A new and separate chapter on "Violence, Terrorism, and War" also includes discussions of human rights and war crimes.
- A new concluding chapter addresses "Technology and the Professions" and includes material from the former chapter "Ethical Issues in Science and Technology."

- Several new readings appear here from Plato, Mary Midgley, Nel Noddings, Richard Wasserstrom, Michael Walzer, R. G. Frye and Christopher Morris, William Baxter, Susan Wolf, Carl Becker, and Xiaorong Li.
- The introductions to the issues chapters in Part II are thoroughly updated with recent empirical data, statistics, court decisions, and related news items. New topics include physician-assisted suicide, racial profiling, cyberterrorism, biodiversity, gay marriage, war crimes, animal experimentation, and gun violence.
- New case studies are offered for discussion.
- Updated bibliographies have been expanded.
- An outline of the history of ethics is available for quick reference.

Web-Related Elements

InfoTrac. Available with this text is InfoTrac College Edition, a searchable, online database of full-text articles from more than 900 periodicals and journals. Instructors may easily extend student research or assign current articles to complement their courses beyond the text's scope. In this text, before the end of each chapter, I indicate related topics to search and sample articles available in this database. Instructors who wish to try this service themselves or order their text with this free option should contact their local Wadsworth representative.

Useful Web Sites. Also listed at the end of each chapter are useful and relevant Web sites that students may contact for interest or for use in research and writing assignments.

Citing Internet Sources

A section on how to cite Internet sources in the appendix, "How to Write an Ethics Paper" also contains a brief description of the meaning of the format for these citations as well as directions for using the Internet for research papers.

Instructor's Manual Online

The Instructor's Manual (IM) will now be available online at [<http://philosophy.wadsworth.com>](http://philosophy.wadsworth.com) The Instructor's Manual is password-protected so that only instructors will have access to it. Interested instructors should contact their local Wadsworth sales representative or Wadsworth directly for a password. The IM includes:

- suggestions for different chapter orderings,
- suggestions for how to introduce each chapter,
- lists of key words,
- answers to the study guide questions for the reading selections,
- answers to the review exercises,
- questions to stimulate further thought, and
- further test questions and answers.

Key Elements

The following are key elements of this edition:

Text. Each chapter in both the theory and issues parts of the text contains an extended introduction. These are somewhat more detailed than what might usually be found in a reader. As noted above, they have been thoroughly updated for relevant cases and current news items.

The theory chapters present moderately detailed summaries of the theories and major issues, positions, and arguments. The contemporary issues chapters present several different things, including overviews or summaries of:

- current social conditions and recent events that will interest the student in the topic and provide current information;
- conceptual issues such as how to define the key words on the subject matter of the chapter (for example, pornography and terrorism); and
- arguments and suggested ways to organize an ethical analysis of the particular topic.

The presentations in the text often ask questions and are usually followed by possible answers or those that already have been given. The aim is to present more than one side of the issue so that students can decide for themselves what position they will take. This also allows instructors to put whatever emphases they wish on the material or direct the students' focus as they see fit.

Where possible throughout the text, the relation of ethical theory to the practical issues is indicated. For example, one pervasive distinction that is used throughout is the one between consequentialist and nonconsequentialist considerations and arguments. The idea is that if students are able to situate or categorize a kind of reason or argument, then they will be better able to evaluate it critically. References to treatments of related issues in other chapters are also given throughout the text.

Pedagogical Aids. This text is designed to be "user-friendly." To aid both instructor and student, the following pedagogical aids are provided:

- clearly organized material in the textual sections by means of diagrams, subheadings, definitions, and word emphases;
- a real-life event or hypothetical dialogue or updated empirical data at the beginning of each chapter to capture students' interest;
- study questions for each reading selection;
- review exercises at the end of each chapter that also can be used as test or exam questions;
- discussion cases that follow each chapter in Part II and provide opportunities for class or group discussions;
- topics and resources for written assignments in the discussion cases as well as the InfoTrac and Web site suggestions and the selected bibliographies at the end of each chapter; and
- the appendix on how to write an ethics paper, which gives students helpful advice and brief examples of ethics papers.

The outline of the highlights of the history of ethics on page x is admittedly sketchy. It makes no attempt to treat twentieth-century ethics and notes only a couple of non-Western figures. However, for those who are interested in history or in

History of Ethics Time Line

Ancient

500 B.C.E.	400	300	200	100	0	100 C.E.	200
Sappho 637-577	Socrates 469-399	Zeno 351-270			Jesus ?4 B.C.E.-C.E. 29		Plotinus 205-270
	Plato 427-347				Philo Judaeus 20 B.C.E.-C.E. 40		
Buddha 557-477	Aristotle 384-322					Sextus Empiricus 60-117	
Confucius 552-479						Marcus Aurelius 121-180	

Medieval

C.E. 300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1100	1200	1300
Augustine 354-400							Anselm 1033-1109		Aquinas 1224-1274	
	Boethius 480-524							Abelard 1079-1142		Scotus 1265-1308
		Mohammed 570-632								
							Avicenna 980-1037			Ockham 1285-1347
								Maimonides 1135-1204		
								Averroes 1126-1198		

Modern

1500	1600	1700	1800	1900	2000
Bacon 1561-1626	Locke 1632-1704	Hume 1711-1776	Kierkegaard 1813-1851	Moore 1873-1958	
	Hobbes 1588-1679	Kant 1724-1804	Marx 1818-1883	Rawls 1921-	
	Leibniz 1646-1716				
	Spinoza 1632-1677		Hegel 1770-1831	Nietzsche 1844-1900	Habermas 1929-
		Rousseau 1712-1778	Mill 1806-1873		Sartre 1905-1979
		Wollstonecraft 1759-1797			DeBeauvoir 1908-1986
		Bentham 1748-1832		James 1846-1910	
				Dewey 1859-1952	

Part One

Ethical Theory

Ethics and Ethical Reasoning

WHY STUDY ETHICS?

Several years ago, *The New York Times* reported on the morally controversial case of James McElveen.¹ He had fallen from a thirty-foot cliff while on an outing with friends in Tennessee. He was unconscious and bleeding heavily as his friends drove him forty-three miles to the nearest hospital. One of them, Benny Milligan, knew that James needed to go to the emergency room but had no insurance. However, because he had read in the press about cases in which uninsured emergency room patients in his state were reportedly not given the best care, he was worried that his friend would not receive adequate treatment. In a panic, Mr. Milligan checked his friend into the hospital with his own medical insurance card. Mr. McElveen received not only excellent emergency aid, but also first-class ongoing treatment. His total bill of more than \$41,000 was sent to the federal government because Mr. Milligan's medical insurance coverage was from a government space-shuttle project on which he had been working. In September 1992, the deception was discovered, and both Mr. Milligan and Mr. McElveen were convicted of fraud and conspiracy to defraud the government. They were ordered to repay the \$41,000 and were given prison terms. There was no question that they had lied. However, they argued that the health care system was unfair and that they had feared for Mr. McElveen's life. Was their action justified?

Most of us usually disapprove of dishonesty. But was it wrong in this case? On the one hand, we tend to agree that some behaviors and attitudes are simply wrong. We criticize the lack of standards in public campaigning, for example. We condemn excessive greed by the financially powerful. We abhor vicious street crime and its wanton disregard for human life. And we think that more ought to be done for the homeless. The fact that such behaviors and attitudes exist, we say, does not make them right.

On the other hand, we disagree about many moral issues. Is the death penalty a barbarous and inhumane practice or just recompense? Is abortion unjustified killing or at least sometimes a morally permissible choice? Is lying always wrong or is it sometimes justifiable? That was the question raised by the case of Mr. Milligan. Even sincere people who try to decide what is right in such matters have difficulty doing so.

Moreover, we often face difficult choices of a more personal type. Financially strapped students agonize over whether to take a heavier schedule of classes, knowing that the overload will prevent them from doing their best work. Parents worry about whether they are being too strict or too lenient with their children. Employees wonder whether they should inform supervisors of another worker's drug problems. We may wonder whether these are actually moral problems, but they are because they are choices about what is

good and bad, or better and worse, or even right and wrong.

How do we know what is the right or better thing to do? An in-depth study of matters of good and bad, right and wrong should be of some help.

WHAT IS ETHICS?

I have asked students on the first day of an ethics class to write one-paragraph answers to each of two questions: "What is ethics?" and "Can it be taught?" How would you answer? There have been significant differences of opinion among my students on both issues. Ethics is a highly personal thing, some wrote, a set of moral beliefs that develop over the years. Although the values may initially come from one's family upbringing, they later result from one's own choices. Others thought that ethics is a set of social principles, the codes of one's society or particular groups within it, such as medical or legal organizations. Some wrote that many people get their ethical beliefs from their religion.

On the question of whether ethics can be taught, the students again have given a variety of answers. "If it can't be taught, why are we taking this class?" one person wondered. "Look at public immorality; these people haven't been taught properly," another commented. Still another disagreed. Although certain ideas or types of knowledge can be taught, ethical behavior cannot because it is a matter of individual choice.

One general conclusion can be drawn from these students' comments: We tend to think of ethics as the set of values or principles held by individuals or groups. I have my ethics and you have yours, and groups also have sets of values with which they tend to identify. We can think of ethics as a study of the various sets of values that people do have. This could be done historically and comparatively, for example, or with a psychological interest in determining how people form their values and when they tend to act on them. We can also think of ethics as a critical enterprise. We would then ask whether any particular set of values or beliefs is better than any other. Are there good reasons for preferring them? Ethics, as we will pursue it in this text, is this latter type of study. We will examine various ethical views and types of reasoning

from a critical or evaluative standpoint. This examination will also help us come to a better understanding of our own and various societies' values.

Ethics is a branch of *philosophy*. It is also called *moral philosophy*. Although not everyone agrees on what philosophy is, let's think of it as a discipline or study in which we ask—and attempt to answer—basic questions about key areas or subject matters of human life and about pervasive and significant aspects of experience. Some philosophers, such as Plato and Kant, have tried to do this systematically by interrelating their philosophical views in many areas. According to Alfred North Whitehead, "Philosophy is the endeavor to frame a coherent, logical, necessary system of general ideas in terms of which every element of our experience can be interpreted."² Others believe that philosophers today must work at problems piecemeal, focusing on one particular issue at a time. For instance, some might analyze the meaning of the phrase "to know," while others might work on the morality of lying. Furthermore, some philosophers are optimistic about our ability to answer these questions, while others are more skeptical because they think that the way we analyze the issues and the conclusions we draw will always be colored by our background, culture, and ways of thinking. Most agree, however, that the questions are worth wondering and caring about.

We can ask philosophical questions about many subjects. In aesthetics, or the philosophy of art, philosophers ask questions not about how to interpret a certain novel or painting, but about basic or foundational questions such as, What kinds of things do or should count as art (rocks arranged in a certain way, for example)? Is what makes something an object of aesthetic interest its emotional expressiveness, its peculiar formal nature, or its ability to show us certain truths that cannot be described? In the philosophy of science, philosophers ask not about the structure or composition of some chemical or biological material, but about such matters as whether scientific knowledge gives us a picture of reality as it is, whether progress exists in science, and whether it is meaningful to talk about *the* scientific method. Philosophers of law seek to understand the nature