

Metaethics Coding Document

| Key concept | Options | Positions / characteristics | Specific flavours |
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| Moral semantics ("What is the meaning of moral terms or judgments?") | Cognitivism (moral sentences are capable of being true or false) | Moral realism (Moral statement or propositions are about mind-independent facts or properties of moral reality) | Ethical naturalism (Objective moral properties are reducible to non-ethical properties; implicitly assumed, e.g. by utilitarians) |
| | | | Ethical non-naturalism (There are irreducible moral properties that we have intuitive or a priori awareness of.) |
| | | Ethical subjectivism (The truth or meaning of moral statements is relative to the attitudes or feelings of individuals. Subjectivists think that there are right answers in ethics, but they are relative to each person's values. Similar to social or cultural relativism. Both subjectivists and relativists regard people as the authors of morality.) | |
| | | Error theory (Ethical claims express propositions but they are always false.) | |

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| | <p>Non-cognitivism (neither true nor false; no truth value); also compatible with instrumentalism.</p> | <p>Emotivism (Moral statements express emotion or attitudes towards some state of affairs or norms.)</p> | |
| | | <p>Quasi-realism (Ethical claims are like factual claims but there are no empirical facts linked to them; moral reality is projected into our experience, as part of our psychology.)</p> | |
| | | <p>Prescriptivism (Moral statements are imperatives that aim to influence behavior of others.)</p> | |
| Moral ontology ("What is the nature of moral reality?" "Are there moral facts?") | <p>Realism (Moral facts exist independently of human minds or beliefs; the truth of a moral claim does not depend on us; moral truths are discovered.)</p> | | |
| | <p>Anti-realism/ Instrumentalism (Moral facts do not exist; morality is invented or constructed.)</p> | <p>Evolutionary accounts (Moral beliefs are heavily influenced by evolutionary pressures (natural selection). Natural selection tracks adaptiveness (what helps survival and reproduction), not objective truth. It has no mechanism for detecting</p> | |

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| | | mind-independent moral facts. Moral facts are adaptive illusions.) | |
| | Constructivism: (Facts about the responses of ideal participants ground the truth of moral statements.) | | |
| Moral epistemology ("How may moral judgments be supported or defended?") | Empiricism (Moral truths and knowledge are gained by observation, experimentation, and experience.) | | |
| | Moral rationalism (Moral truth can be known and discovered a priori.) | Ethical intuitionism (Moral truths can be known directly and self-evidently without inference; typically cognitivist and realist.) | |
| | Moral absolutism (There is a single objective standard of right action.) | Monism (There is a single, usually universal, moral principle from which all right action can be derived.) | |
| | Moral relativism/pluralism (No single standard exists to assess the truth of moral propositions; there may be a plurality of standards.) | Cultural relativism (Moral truths are relative to a culture, society, or group.) | |
| | | Personal relativism (Moral truths are relative to particular people.) | |
| | Moral skepticism (No one has moral knowledge.) | | |

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| <p>Ethical theory (is there a visible commitment to a particular ethical theory in the paper?)</p> | <p>Deontology/ non-consequentialism (Rule-based approach to ethics that rejects the moral relevance of empirical consequences in determining right and wrong action.)</p> | |
| | <p>Utilitarianism/consequentialism (Right actions (or rules) are those whose consequences are expected to maximize the general welfare, pleasure, utility, fitness, reward, payoffs. Only the consequences of action are morally relevant. The “best consequences” are to be interpreted from an impartial perspective.)</p> | <p>Rule utilitarianism (Morally right action is to follow a moral rule that, if generally followed by everyone, would produce the best overall consequences in terms of utility, welfare, or happiness.)</p> |
| | | <p>Act utilitarianism (Morally right action produces the best overall consequences in terms of utility, welfare, or happiness.)</p> |
| | <p>Virtue ethics (Aristotelian or neo-Aristotelian versions. The cultivation of feelings and behavioral dispositions to act as a virtuous person would in a given situation.)</p> | |
| | <p>Postmodern ethics (Rejection of universalism and grand narratives, suspicion of reason as a foundation, embrace of ambiguity and uncertainty, focus on "The Other".)</p> | |
| | <p>Information ethics (Floridi) (Focus on the</p> | |

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| | <p>Infosphere, clear distinction between moral agents and moral patients, entropy as evil.)</p> <p>Care ethics (Centrality of relationships, the moral importance of emotion, rejection of universalism in favor of the particular, focus on vulnerability and Interdependence)</p> <p>Other</p> | |
| Descriptive / normative | <p>Descriptive (Describes or reports patterns of phenomena without evaluating them)</p> <p>Normative (Makes ought statements and evaluates some IS phenomenon of interest as better or worse with respect to certain ethical criteria.)</p> | <p>Pure (No model or testing)</p> <p>Empirical (Includes a test of theory or framework or mechanism or model)</p> |
| Why be moral? Source of moral motivation and value | <p>Legal duties (One must obey one's legal duties.)</p> <p>Ethical duty (One must obey ethical or moral duties, which are distinct from legal duties.)</p> <p>Professional or organizational duty (One must obey one's duty in one's role as a member of a team or organization.)</p> | |

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| | <p>Self-interest/egoism ((Rational) self-interest is the fundamental driver of ethical behavior.)</p> | <p>Ethical egoism (A normative theory of behavior. All people should act in their own self-interest. Altruism is immoral and a betrayal of one's own interests.</p> | |
| | | <p>Psychological Egoism (A descriptive theory of behavior. All people act in their own self-interest. True altruism is impossible. Apparent altruism is just hidden selfishness.)</p> | |