



An Introduction to Contemporary Metaethics

By Alex Miller

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This introduction provides a highly readable critical overview of the main arguments and themes in twentieth-century and contemporary metaethics. It traces the development of contemporary debates in metaethics from their beginnings in the work of G. E. Moore up to the most recent arguments between naturalism and non-naturalism, cognitivism and non-cognitivism.

- A highly readable critical overview of the main arguments and themes in twentieth century and contemporary metaethics.
- Asks: Are there moral facts? Is there such a thing as moral truth? Is moral knowledge possible?
- Traces the development of contemporary debates in metaethics from their beginnings in the work of G. E. Moore up to the most recent debates between naturalism and non-naturalism, cognitivism and noncognitivism.
- Provides for the first time a critical survey of famous figures in twentieth century metaethics such as Moore, Ayer and Mackie together with in-depth discussions of contemporary philosophers such as Blackburn, Gibbard, Wright, Harman, Railton, Sturgeon, McDowell and Wiggins.

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Editorial Review

Review

"*An Introduction to Contemporary Metaethics* provides for the first time a critical survey of famous figures in 20th Century metaethics together with in-depth discussions of contemporary philosophers and will be an invaluable resource for students, teachers and professional philosophers with interests in contemporary metaethics."

Philosophical Inquiry

"A precise and accessible reading of a rather complicated subject."

Syzetesis

"In this book Alexander Miller, an established expert in moral philosophy, provides a concise, clear and insightful account of the central issues of metaethics. He manages to make these difficult issues accessible to those who are new to this area of philosophy, while offering original contributions to the debates that will be of interest to experts in the field. This is an engaging and accomplished introductory work."

Philip Stratton-Lake, *University of Reading*

"Miller's book is ambitious, lucid, and comprehensive – an extremely useful and detailed study of the field. I wish it had been available when I taught my graduate seminar in moral realism, for it would have made an excellent reference work throughout the course – both for its clear exposition and its rigorous critical perspectives. I recommend it to all serious students of metaethics."

John Corvino, *Wayne State University*

From the Back Cover

An Introduction to Contemporary Metaethics provides a highly readable critical overview of the main arguments and themes in twentieth-century and contemporary metaethics. It traces the development of contemporary debates in metaethics from their beginnings in the work of G. E. Moore up to the most recent arguments between naturalism and non-naturalism, cognitivism and non-cognitivism.

Individual chapters deal with: the open-question arguments and Moore's attack on ethical naturalism; A. J. Ayer's emotivism and the rejection of non-naturalism; Simon Blackburn's quasi-realism; Allan Gibbard's norm-expressivism; J. L. Mackie's 'error-theory' of moral judgement; anti-realist and best opinion accounts of moral truth; the non-reductionist naturalism of the 'Cornell realists'; Peter Railton's naturalistic reductionism; the analytic functionalism of Frank Jackson and Philip Pettit; the contemporary non-naturalism of John McDowell and David Wiggins; and the debate between internalists and externalists in moral psychology.

The book will be an invaluable resource for students, teachers and professional philosophers with interests in contemporary metaethics.

About the Author

Alexander Miller is senior lecturer at Macquarie University, Sydney. He is the author of *Philosophy of Language* (1998) and co-editor (with Crispin Wright) of *Rule-Following and Meaning* (2002), as well as a number of articles on the philosophy of language and mind, metaphysics and metaethics.

Users Review

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