



The Good Life: Options in Ethics

Burton F. Porter

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A primer in ethics focusing on ultimate aims in living as proposed throughout philosophic history.

Preliminary chapters cover the relation between ethics and science, religion, and psychology, as well as the challenge of relativism and determinism. The central section explores the ethical theories of hedonism, from the Greeks to the Utilitarians; self-realization, both of the individual and of our humanness, naturalism, including the Stoics and Transcendentalists; evolutionism as presented by both Darwin and Spencer; the ethic of duty of Immanuel Kant; religious systems including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism; virtue ethics in traditional and feminist forms; and existentialism from Nietzsche to Sartre.

At various points, key concepts are introduced such as egoism and altruism, hard and soft determinism, deontology vs. teleology, and act and rule approaches to ethics. In addition, the "standard of reasonableness" is discussed as a means of evaluating the ethical options.

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