

The Theory of Morality and millions of other books are available for Amazon Kindle. Learn more Enter your mobile number or email address below and we'll send you a link to download the free Kindle App.

References and Further Reading 1. On a law conception of ethics, conformity with the virtues requires obeying the divine law. A divine law requires the existence of God, as the divine lawgiver. Since we have given up belief in God, we should also give up the moral understanding that rests on such belief, and engage in moral philosophy without using such terms. For Anscombe, this meant that we should abandon talk of morality as law, and instead focus on morality as virtue. Alan Donagan argues against these conclusions. First, he rejects her claim that we can only treat morality as a system of law if we also presuppose the existence of a divine lawgiver. Second, Donagan contends that neither must we abandon law-based conceptions of morality for an Aristotelian virtue ethic. Given this, if we assume that human reason is at least in principle adequate for directing our lives, then the substance of divine law that is relevant to human life can be appreciated with human reason, apart from any reference to a divine being. Moreover, according to Donagan, even if we conceive of morality as Aristotle did, namely, as a matter of virtue, it is quite natural to think that each virtue has as its counterpart some moral rule or precept. And if we can apprehend the relevant moral virtue via human reason, then we can also apprehend the relevant moral law by that same reason. Given the foregoing points raised by Anscombe and Donagan, a divine command theorist might opt for a conception of morality as virtue, as law, or both. Before looking at some possible advantages of Divine Command Theory, it will be helpful to clarify further the content of the view. Edward Wierenga points out that there are many ways to conceive of the connection between God and morality. A strong version of Divine Command Theory includes the claim that moral statements x is obligatory are defined in terms of theological statements x is commanded by God. At the other end of the spectrum is the view that the commands of God are coextensive with the demands of morality. Wierenga opts for a view that lies between these strong and weak versions of Divine Command Theory. In what follows, I will, following Wierenga, take Divine Command Theory to include the following claims: According to Kant, we must believe that God exists because the requirements of morality are too much for us to bear. We must believe that there is a God who will help us satisfy the demands of the moral law. With such a belief, we have the hope that we will be able to live moral lives. However, if there is a God and an afterlife where the righteous are rewarded with happiness and justice obtains, this problem goes away. That is, being moral does not guarantee happiness, so we must believe in a God who will reward the morally righteous with happiness. Kant does not employ the concept of moral faith as an argument for Divine Command Theory, but a contemporary advocate could argue along Kantian lines that these advantages do accrue to this view of morality. Another possible advantage of Divine Command Theory is that it provides an objective metaphysical foundation for morality. For those committed to the existence of objective moral truths, such truths seem to fit well within a theistic framework. That is, if the origin of the universe is a personal moral being, then the existence of objective moral truths are at home, so to speak, in the universe. By contrast, if the origin of the universe is non-moral, then the existence of such truths becomes philosophically perplexing, because it is unclear how moral properties can come into existence via non-moral origins. Given the metaphysical insight that *ex nihilo, nihilo fit*, the resulting claim is that out of the non-moral, nothing moral comes. Objective moral properties stick out due to a lack of naturalness of fit in an entirely naturalistic universe. This perspective assumes that objective moral properties exist, which is of course highly controversial. Not only does Divine Command Theory provide a metaphysical basis for morality, but according to many it also gives us a good answer to the question, why be moral? William Lane Craig argues that this is an advantage of a view of ethics that is grounded in God. On theism, we are held accountable for our actions by God. Those who do evil will be punished, and those who live morally upstanding lives will be vindicated and even rewarded. Good, in the end, triumphs over evil. Justice will win out. Moreover, on a theistic view of ethics, we have a reason to act in ways that run counter to our self-interest, because such actions of self-sacrifice have deep significance and merit within a theistic framework. On Divine Command

Theory it is therefore rational to sacrifice my own well-being for the well-being of my children, my friends, and even complete strangers, because God approves of and even commands such acts of self-sacrifice. An important objection to the foregoing points is that there is something inadequate about a punishment and reward orientation of moral motivation. That is, one might argue that if the motive for being moral on Divine Command Theory is to merely avoid punishment and perhaps gain eternal bliss, then this is less than ideal as an account of moral motivation, because it is a mark of moral immaturity. Should we not instead seek to live moral lives in community with others because we value them and desire their happiness? In response to this, advocates of Divine Command Theory may offer different accounts of moral motivation, agreeing that a moral motivation based solely on reward and punishment is inadequate. For example, perhaps the reason to be moral is that God designed human beings to be constituted in such a way that being moral is a necessary condition for human flourishing. Some might object that this is overly egoistic, but at any rate it seems less objectionable than the motivation to be moral provided by the mere desire to avoid punishment. Augustine see Kent, develops a view along these lines. Augustine begins with the notion that ethics is the pursuit of the supreme good, which provides the happiness that all humans seek. He then claims that the way to obtain this happiness is to love the right objects, that is, those that are worthy of our love, in the right way. In order to do this, we must love God, and then we will be able to love our friends, physical objects, and everything else in the right way and in the right amount. However, even if these points in defense of Divine Command Theory are thought to be satisfactory, there is another problem looming for the view that was famously discussed by Plato over two thousand years ago. The Euthyphro Dilemma The dialogue between Socrates and Euthyphro is nearly omnipresent in philosophical discussions of the relationship between God and ethics. Charges have been brought against Socrates by Miletus, who claims that Socrates is guilty of corrupting the youth of Athens by leading them away from belief in the proper gods. In the course of their conversation, Socrates is surprised to discover that Euthyphro is prosecuting his own father for the murder of a servant. Euthyphro maintains that his family fails to understand the divine attitude to his action. This then sets the stage for a discussion of the nature of piety between Socrates and Euthyphro. In this discussion, Socrates asks Euthyphro the now philosophically famous question that he and any divine command theorist must consider: A defender of Divine Command Theory might respond that an action is morally right because God commands it. However, the implication of this response is that if God commanded that we inflict suffering on others for fun, then doing so would be morally right. We would be obligated to do so, because God commanded it. This is because, on Divine Command Theory, the reason that inflicting such suffering is wrong is that God commands us not to do it. However, if God commanded us to inflict such suffering, doing so would become the morally right thing to do. Most advocates of Divine Command Theory do not want to be stuck with the implication that cruelty could possibly be morally right, nor do they want to accept the implication that the foundations of morality are arbitrary. By taking this route, the divine command theorist avoids having to accept that inflicting suffering on others for fun could be a morally right action. More generally, she avoids the arbitrariness that plagues any Divine Command Theory which includes the claim that an action is right solely because God commands it. However, two new problems now arise. If God commands a particular action because it is morally right, then ethics no longer depends on God in the way that Divine Command Theorists maintain. God is no longer the author of ethics, but rather a mere recognizer of right and wrong. As such, God no longer serves as the foundation of ethics. Moreover, it now seems that God has become subject to an external moral law, and is no longer sovereign. John Arthur puts the point this way: God is no longer sovereign over the entire universe, but rather is subject to a moral law external to himself. The notion that God is subject to an external moral law is also a problem for theists who hold that in the great chain of being, God is at the top. Here, there is a moral law external to and higher than God, and this is a consequence that many divine command theorists would want to reject. Hence, the advocate of a Divine Command Theory of ethics faces a dilemma: Responses to the Euthyphro Dilemma a. Bite the Bullet One possible response to the Euthyphro Dilemma is to simply accept that if God does command cruelty, then inflicting it upon others would be morally obligatory. Most people find this to be an unacceptable view of moral obligation, on the grounds that any theory of ethics that leaves open the possibility that such actions are morally praiseworthy is fatally

flawed. That is, even if it is logically possible that God could command cruelty, it is not something that God will do, given his character in the actual world. Given this, Ockham himself was surely not prepared to inflict suffering on others if God commanded it. Even with this proviso, however, many reject this type of response to the Euthyphro Dilemma. Human Nature Another response to the Euthyphro Dilemma which is intended to avoid the problem of arbitrariness is discussed by Clark and Poortenga , drawing upon the moral theory of Thomas Aquinas. If we conceive of the good life for human beings as consisting in activities and character qualities that fulfill us, then the good life will depend upon our nature, as human beings. Given human nature, some activities and character traits will fulfill us, and some will not. For example, neither drinking gasoline nor lying nor committing adultery will help us to function properly and so be fulfilled, as human beings. God created us with a certain nature. Once he has done this, he cannot arbitrarily decide what is good or bad for us, what will help or hinder us from functioning properly. God could have created us differently. That is, it is possible that he could have made us to thrive and be fulfilled by ingesting gasoline, lying, and committing adultery. But, according to Aquinas, he did no such thing. We must live lives marked by a love for God and other people, if we want to be fulfilled as human beings. The defender of this type of response to the Euthyphro Dilemma, to avoid the charge of arbitrariness, should explain why God created us with the nature that we possess, rather than some other nature. What grounded this decision? Alston formulates the Euthyphro dilemma as a question regarding which of the two following statements a divine command theorist should accept: We ought to love one another because God commands us to do so. God commands us to love one another because that is what we ought to do. But this trivialization is not what we mean when we assert that God is morally good. Alston summarizes his argument for this claim as follows: On this view, moral obligations attach to all human beings, even those so saintly as to totally lack any tendency, in the ordinary sense of that term, to do other than what it is morally good to do. And no moral obligations attach to God, assuming, as we are here, that God is essentially perfectly good.

Chapter 2 : The Theory of Morality by Alan Donagan

The book The Theory of Morality, Alan Donagan is published by University of Chicago Press. What a Theory of Morality Is a Theory of Morality as a.

Roger Wertheimer The Theory of Morality. JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. The University of Chicago Press, , pp. A morality, Donagan insists, is a set of precepts of conduct ascertainable by human reason and binding on any rational being by his being such. The Hebrew-Christian tradition developed this conception and, it claimed, a morality to match it. The traditional philosophical task Donagan assumes is to present the nontheistic part of morality as a philosophical system. All the various moral precepts are to be derived from a single fundamental a priori principle whose "canonical form" is: It is impermissible not to respect every human being, oneself or any other, as a rational creature. For Donagan, the various precepts e. Allegedly, it is "possible to determine many specificatory premises with virtual certainty and many with a high degree of confidence" from the concurrence in the understanding of that concept by "those who share in the life of a culture in which the Hebrew-Christian moral tradition is accepted. The next chapter quickly analyzes agency and provides the precepts for judging it. The final chapters defend the theory against allegations of inconsistency and attacks by consequentialists, and attempt to supply the theory with a foundation. Throughout, erudition and This content downloaded on Tue, 26 Feb Despite the size of the book, its ambitions and scope are not modest. I shall focus on its central and distinctive feature, its conception and employment of the principle of respect for persons. Few philosophers today reject the principle of respect and perhaps most accept it as being in some sense fundamental, yet disagreement abounds about just what that sense is. It is precisely these ideas that call for interpretation Without the principles of right and justice This retort is pure ritual uncontaminated by argument. There exists no proof that the principle of respect must coincide with the precepts of morality, nor even a reason given for presuming it. Not surprisingly, the tradition contains much muddlement about the nature of respect, and most commonly respect is mistaken for some member of the family of attitudes motivating beneficence: This content downloaded on Tue, 26 Feb The civilly disobedient whose act evidences lack of respect for the law and the authority may well claim to be the true lover of his country who acts to save it from its errant mandates rather than blindly obey out of respect; at the same time he may well, out of respect, willingly submit to punishment for his disobedience. Respect for truth may motivate honesty and candor, but not, as love of truth does, the quest for wisdom, certainty or scientific knowledge. We rescue drowning puppy dogs and pussy cats as we rescue persons, not from respect, but from something like sympathy. Here, violating a law is failing to respect it, whatever the explanation for the violation may be and even whether it was intentional. But now, this purely behavioral respect cannot have as its object a human being person, rational creature , but only something like his rights. On this reading, talk of respecting a person is simply a façon de parler for respecting his rights. And further, this principle of behavioral respect for persons cannot possibly be the fundamental moral principle since it presupposes and cannot provide a system of norms to be obeyed. The command to respect behaviorally a person i. Rawls seems prey to the same equivocation. Elsewhere, scattered throughout his book, he presents various "requirements of respect. That connection may be partly causal, partly conceptual, or some tertiumquid philosophers have yet to comprehend. In any case, unless so-called logical behaviorism is true, there are no true statements of the form: If someone has attitude, R, then, no matter what else is true, he performs action, A or refrains from action, B. From the principle that we are to respect or love or whatever persons, nothing can be directly deduced about the specific conduct we may or may not engage in. Donagan unwittingly concedes this by implication when he describes Falstaff as a man who, despite his frequent immoralities, maintained a respect for others. The concession seems unwitting since it challenges his derivational scheme according to which it must be impossible to obey the fundamental principle yet violate some subsidiary precept. The strain here comes from the conflation of attitudinal and behavioral respect which precludes any divergence. We can say in

the abstract what behavior will be motivated by an attitude only if, first, the attitude is the dominant effective motive, and secondly, no cognitive defect e. Yet even this twin idealization would suffice only if the attitude were simply a desire which did nothing but motivate the most effective means to its satisfaction. One mark of desire is that, barring internal conflict, success is experienced as satisfying, inherently pleasurable, whereas failure is experienced as frustration, painful. Respect lacks any such relation to sensibility. Respecting someone is not itself pleasurable. Doing what respect motivates you to do may be independently pleasurable or at least a source of pride and the pleasures attendant thereon, just as failing to express the respect one has when an expression of respect is called for may be a cause of painful shame, but the latter is not the pain of frustrated desire and the former is not the contrary pleasure. Further, to the extent that the expressive behavior is specifiable, doubts arise about the foundational role of respect. Notoriously, the principle of love seems to presuppose and be incapable of providing the principles of justice, for it directs us to seek the good of all alike and seems to provide no guidance where the good of different persons conflicts. The principle of respect seems to This content downloaded on Tue, 26 Feb Just as we may be unfair to someone by insulting him showing disrespect for him, we may also insult someone by being unfair to him. By giving him less than his due we may expose him as powerless to secure what is his; by giving him more than his share we may present him as being weak and needful of special favors. In either case, what is insulting and disrespectful derives from the principles of fairness and thus seem incapable of accounting for them. Apparently respect and love cannot begin to motivate anything approaching the full range of moral conduct without antecedently given principles. Moreover, unless restrained by such precepts they seem to readily motivate immoral activity. Love is the natural and major motivation for paternalistic interference and invasions of privacy. Respect presents rather different perils. Even the defeat and the very destruction of a thing may be impelled by respect for it and fear of shame before it. To this it may be retorted that the proper remedy is a healthy self respect, and since that is prescribed by the principle of universal respect, that principle cannot conflict with morality. This reply concedes that respect for others may express itself in immorality, and claims that the conflict with morality is precluded by self respect. Yet that conflict is precluded only if self respect is thought to be violated by violating antecedently given norms. Certainly a more elaborate analysis of respect will be needed. It is needed for the historical analysis as well. He writes as though the concepts and precepts of liberalism-to give his moral view its proper name-were present in Biblical, Talmudic and Scholastic teachings, awaiting only the proper philosophical formulation Kant provided. Unlike a prohibition of murder, some version of which is found in every culture, and unlike a principle of universal love, some version of which is found in diverse cultures, the principle of respect is not to be found outside societies influenced by the liberal tradition. Perhaps every culture enjoins some kind of respect, but mainly it is rather some distant cousin of respect and even then it is to be directed only at select persons: Not till the end of the 18th century did anyone ever assert that we should respect every person or human being. Even if it could have been asserted, nothing suggests that anyone did or would have believed it then. Nowadays the principle of respect is uttered and received as a moral platitude no one dares publicly deny. A cultural-moral and personality-transformation of the first magnitude has transpired. The Kantian claims of respect, intrinsic worth, inherent dignity are alien to early Christianity. The New Testament tells us God loves each of us and we are to model ourselves on Him. It is not said that we are loved by God or to be loved by others because we are loveable or valuable, which, by the way, is just as well since it is exceedingly strange to love someone because of his value or for his dignity. Stranger still would it be to love someone because he is a rational This content downloaded on Tue, 26 Feb We are not worthy of or entitled to this love. Paul in particular insisted that we are inherently worthless and utterly undeserving of this love. It is a gratuitous love, freely given, unmotivated by any principle of practical reason. God owes us nothing, not love and least of all respect. To repeat, our attitude toward others is to be modeled on His attitude toward us, and His attitude toward us could not be respect. The revolutionary character of the principle of respect lies not in its egalitarianism. The Christian ideology dominating pre-Enlightenment theory and practice was no less egalitarian in its conception of human beings as equal children of God, equal in His sight, loved equally by Him and thereby of equal transcendental value. This is an equality in relation to God. It is compatible with any degree of political, social and economic inequality. Being the object of this gratuitous

love does not empower the beloved to demand anything from Him or anyone else. Love motivates paternalistic constraints. And love itself, like Medieval Christianity, has no principled unequivocal objection to slavery or serfdom. So too, love is no respecter of privacy. Love seeks intimacy, identification, union; respect requires distance, differentiation, individualization. Harmonizing those humors is cardinal in the Kantian ideal of friendship. Harvard University Press, He has great respect for the liberal tradition, or that part of it which he calls "the liberal-egalitarian philosophy" or "egalitarianism with liberal implications," even while he is a critic of the liberal theories of, among others, Mill, Rawls, and Dworkin. His discussion is pitched at an advanced level in the This content downloaded on Tue, 26 Feb

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If you have philosophical inclinations and want a good workout, this conscientious scrutiny of moral assumptions and expressions will be most rewarding. Donagan explores ways of acting in the Hebrew-Christian context, examines them in the light of natural law and rational theories, and proposes that formal patterns for conduct can emerge. All this is tightly reasoned, the argument is packed, but the language is clear. Throughout the book, one cannot but feel that a serious philosopher is trying to come to terms with his religious-moral background and to defend it against the prevailing secular utilitarian position which seems to dominate academic philosophy. This The Theory of Morality book is not really ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book is information inside this guide incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper you actually read a lot of information you will get. This particular The Theory of Morality without we realize teach the one who examining it become critical in thinking and analyzing. This The Theory of Morality having very good arrangement in word along with layout, so you will not truly feel uninterested in reading. Within this era which is the greater person or who has ability in doing something more are more valuable than other. Do you want to become one among it? It is just simple method to have that. What you have to do is just spending your time very little but quite enough to enjoy a look at some books. One of the books in the top collection in your reading list is The Theory of Morality. This book which can be qualified as The Hungry Slopes can get you closer in turning out to be precious person. By looking up and review this reserve you can get many advantages. What is your hobby? Have you heard which question when you got scholars? We believe that that problem was given by teacher to the students. Many kinds of hobby, All people has different hobby. And you also know that little person like reading or as studying become their hobby. You must know that reading is very important and also book as to be the thing. Book is important thing to provide you knowledge, except your own personal teacher or lecturer. You find good news or update regarding something by book. Numerous books that can you take to be your object. One of them is actually The Theory of Morality. Read The Theory of Morality by Alan Donagan for online ebook The Theory of Morality by Alan Donagan Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read The Theory of Morality by Alan Donagan books to read online.

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Alan Donagan is the author of The Theory of Morality (avg rating, 7 ratings, 2 reviews, published), Spinoza (avg rating, 6 ratings, 2 revi.

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Alan Donagan (10 February - 29 May) was an Australian/American philosopher, distinguished for his theories on the history of philosophy and the nature of morality.