

About the Eighth Edition

In preparing the eighth edition, I improved the wording of around 850 sentences. Readers of the seventh edition might not notice these changes, but I hope the new edition feels well written.

The most significant changes are to Chapter 3, "Subjectivism in Ethics." This is the only chapter that instructors familiar with the seventh edition need to reread in full. In previous editions, we discussed the semantic implications of Ethical Subjectivism without addressing its metaphysical core. Now, however, we discuss nihilism. The middle sections of the chapter have been substantially revised, though much of the old chapter's content remains. Simple Subjectivism and Emotivism are still discussed, though now alongside John L. Mackie's "Error Theory." The second argument against Simple Subjectivism (that it entails infallibility) has been removed. The last section of the chapter has been updated and is now called "The Question of Same-Sex Relations."

Otherwise, the book contains only minor revisions:

- In Chapter 2, "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism," the second claim of Cultural Relativism—that right and wrong are determined by a society's norms—is now singled out as being central to the theory (section 2.2).
- In Chapter 6, "The Social Contract Theory," I eliminated the objection that infants could be tortured because they cannot benefit us (section 6.5). I was troubled by the response that rules forbidding infant torture *would* benefit us because we were once infants ourselves and were thus vulnerable to such abuse.
- In Chapter 7, "The Utilitarian Approach," I removed the reference to the high medical bills of heavy marijuana users because there seem to be no such bills