

Contents

Preface	page ix
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1. Objectivity	5
2. The elements	7
3. Strategy	11
2. MORAL REALISM AND MORAL INQUIRY	14
1. What is moral realism?	14
2. Metaphysical realism	14
3. Moral realism, noncognitivism, and constructivism	17
4. Moral realism, naturalism, and nonnaturalism	22
5. Moral realism and moral inquiry	23
6. The form and content of moral judgments	25
7. The existence of right answers in ethics	29
8. Realism about right answers	31
9. Conclusion	36
3. EXTERNALIST MORAL REALISM	37
1. Internalism and externalism	37
2. Internalism and realism	43
3. Morality and motivation	45
4. Morality and reasons for action	50
5. Background to the antirealist argument	50
6. The antirealist argument	52
7. Realism, relativism, and the diversity of desire	53
8. The justifiability of morality	57
9. The nature of rationality	62
10. Reasons for action and motivation	62
11. A purely instrumental theory of rationality?	63
12. A desire-satisfaction version of rational egoism?	66

13. The justifiability of morality and the nature of rationality	75
14. A realist explanation of the action-guiding character of morality	78
15. Conclusion	79
4. DOES MORAL REALISM MATTER?	81
1. The treatment of amorality	83
2. Revisionary semantics and normative revision	87
3. Could there be an esoteric morality?	87
4. Embarrassing differences?	90
5. Moral realism and absolutism	90
6. Tolerance and fallibilism	92
7. Moral expertise	95
8. Conclusion	98
5. A COHERENTIST MORAL EPISTEMOLOGY	100
1. Foundationalism and coherentism	101
2. Arguments for foundationalism	104
3. Intuitionism	107
4. The antiskeptical argument for foundationalism reconsidered	113
5. Foundationalism reconsidered	116
6. A defense of coherentism	122
7. Coherence and realism	125
8. Coherence and realism in ethics	130
9. Objections to coherence and realism in ethics	133
10. Conclusion	143
6. MORAL REALISM AND THE IS/UGHT THESIS	144
1. The is/ought thesis	145
2. The plausibility of the is/ought thesis	149
3. A threat of skepticism	155
4. A threat of nihilism	155
5. Naturalism and nonnaturalism	156
6. Naturalism and nonnaturalism reconsidered	163
7. Nihilism reconsidered	167
8. Skepticism reconsidered	168
9. Conclusion	170
7. A POSTERIORI OBJECTIONS TO MORAL REALISM	171
1. Metaphysical commitments	172
2. Epistemological commitments	180

3. Moral explanation	182
4. Moral disagreement	197
5. Conclusion	210
8. OBJECTIVE UTILITARIANISM	211
1. Teleological ethics and utilitarianism	213
2. Objectivism about value	217
3. Objective utilitarianism	236
4. Metaphysical and epistemological commitments of objective utilitarianism	237
5. Objective utilitarian naturalism	238
6. Objective utilitarianism and the justifiability of morality	240
7. Objective utilitarian explanations	245
8. Objective utilitarianism and moral disagreement	246
9. The importance of unified moral theories	249
10. Interpersonal comparisons of welfare	252
11. Criteria of rightness, decision procedures, and publicity	256
12. Moral objections to utilitarianism	262
13. Value	263
14. Obligations to others	264
15. Rights	268
16. Distributive justice	270
17. The personal point of view	273
18. The separateness of persons	283
19. Conclusion	290
Appendix 1: Must an infinite regress of justification be vicious?	291
Appendix 2: Coherence, internalism, and externalism in epistemology	296
Appendix 3: The is/ought thesis and intuitionism	301
Appendix 4: Rawlsian constructivism	303
Bibliography	323
Index	335