



The Moral Skeptic (Studies in Feminist Philosophy)

Anita M. Superson

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Anita Superson challenges the traditional picture of the skeptic who asks, "Why be moral?" While holding that the skeptic's position is important, she builds an argument against it by understanding it more deeply, and then shows what it would take to successfully defeat it. Superson argues that we must defeat not only the action skeptic, but the disposition skeptic, who denies that being morally disposed is rationally required, and the motive skeptic, who believes that merely going through the motions in acting morally is rationally permissible. We also have to address the amoralist, who is not moved by moral reasons he recognizes. Superson argues for expanding the skeptic's position from self-interest to privilege to include morally unjustified behavior targeting disenfranchised social groups, as well as revising the traditional expected utility model to exclude desires deformed by patriarchy as irrational. Lastly she argues that the challenge can be answered if it can be shown that it is, in an important way, inconsistent and therefore irrational to privilege oneself over others.

The Moral Skeptic makes an important contribution to both metaethics/moral theory and feminist philosophy, and brings feminist thinking into the larger discussion of the skeptical challenge.

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