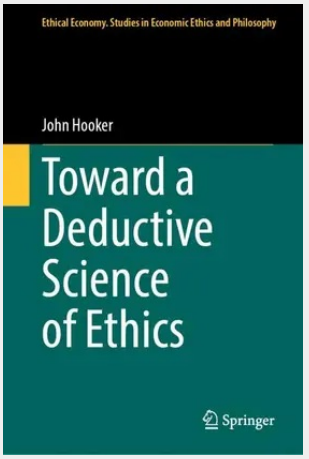
Hooker

Toward a Deductive Science of Ethics



This book maintains that ethics should be addressed with the same rigor and discipline that we bring to science and mathematics. While recognizing that normative ethics cannot be an empirical science, the book develops a science of ethics inspired by the practices of working mathematicians. It treats traditional frameworks such as deontology and utilitarianism as proof techniques that can be used within a single deductive system. Applying this type of reasoning to a number of current ethical dilemmas, the book demonstrates how such an approach can make progress toward resolving controversial issues. Most of the book relies on careful analysis rather than mathematical notation, although two chapters present an explicitly mathematical treatment of distributive justice, reflecting the author's unusual dual background in philosophy and applied mathematics.

The book is of interest to ethicists, philosophers, and welfare economists engaged in ethics-related research, as well as practitioners who develop ethical policies in business, professional, or public policy contexts. Its rigorous treatment will also be valuable to technical specialists who incorporate ethics into mathematical models and artificial intelligence. The book is also suitable for postgraduate students in these areas.

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