

The Persistence of Moral Skepticism

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Abstract

"I see what morality requires me to do, but I don't know why I should do it." Moral skepticism is as old as philosophy, and over the past 2000 or so years, philosophers have sought both the moral education able to forestall the skepticism, and arguments showing the skepticism to be, simply, a mistake. I will deploy materials from a recent account of moral standing to assemble a novel explanation for skepticism's tenacity. The explanation has the consequence that, no matter how good it is, theory will not do away with moral skeptics; it has the further consequence that, in the long run, no form of moral education will do the job, either. I will conclude by briefly considering an alternative role for moral theory and moral education.