

Three Challenges to Ethics



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This book's author argues that traditional ethics has yet to face up to three important challenges that come from environmentalism, feminism, and multiculturalism. This failure to face up to these challenges has meant that no matter how successful traditional ethics has been at dealing with the problems it recognizes, it has failed to deal with the possibility that its solutions to these problems are biased in favour of humans, biased in favour of men, and biased in favour of Western culture. Failure to deal with these challenges has clearly put the justification of traditional ethics into question. Thus those concerned with the justification of traditional ethics have no alternative but to try to determine how these challenges can be met. To meet the challenges, Sterba argues that traditional ethics must incorporate conflict resolution principles that favour nonhumans over humans in a significant range of cases, must rule out gendered family structures and implement an ideal of androgyny, and must endorse an ethics that is secular in character and one that can survive a wide-ranging comparative evaluation of both Western and non-Western moral ideals and cultures.

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