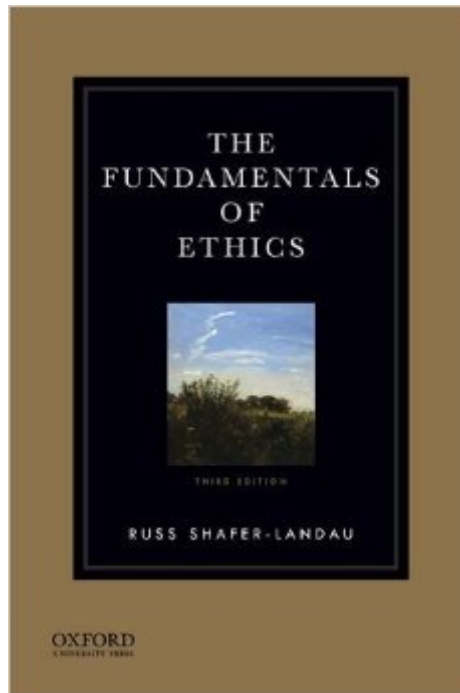




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# **The Fundamentals Of Ethics**



## Synopsis

In *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, Third Edition, author Russ Shafer-Landau employs a uniquely engaging writing style to introduce students to the essential ideas of moral philosophy. Offering more comprehensive coverage of the good life, normative ethics, and metaethics than any other text of its kind, this book also addresses issues that are often omitted from other texts, such as the doctrine of doing and allowing, the doctrine of double effect, ethical particularism, the desire-satisfaction theory of well-being, and moral error theory. Shafer-Landau carefully reconstructs and analyzes dozens of arguments in depth, at a level that is understandable to students with no prior philosophical background. The text is supplemented by an online Instructor's Manual and Computerized Test Bank and a Companion Website with student self-quizzes and additional resources. Ideal for courses in introductory ethics and contemporary moral problems, this book can be used as a stand-alone text or with the author's companion reader, *The Ethical Life: Fundamental Readings in Ethics and Moral Problems*, Third Edition.

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## Customer Reviews

"This is truly an exceptional book. The writing is clean, accessible, and even fun to read! Students love it. We can get right into the issues at hand, with no time wasted trying to figure out what the author said/meant. This is hands-down the best introductory volume for undergraduate level ethics I have ever encountered."--Kelly Heuer, Georgetown University  
"There is nothing that comes close in terms of accessibility. I have recommended this book to many a colleague. It's succinct and accessible without sacrificing the integrity of the arguments; it's a model of how to do--and

write--good philosophy, it's inexpensive, and students actually seem to learn from it. What more could you ask for?"--Bob Fischer, Texas State University

"The greatest strength is the clarity of the writing. The relevant theories and concepts are presented in an accessible manner to students who have no background in philosophy. The ancillaries are fantastic. The text is clear, comprehensive, and inexpensive, with additional aids online that will assist students."--Darren Hibbs, Nova Southeastern University

"This book is excellent; thoughtful, clear, and pitched just right for our students. It is especially useful for students with little previous background in the formal study of ethics. I always use this text bundled with Shafer-Landau's *The Ethical Life*."--James Craig Hanks, Texas State University

"I have used this text the past two times that I've offered the course. It remains superior to Rachels. I have and will continue to recommend this book to colleagues. I would emphasize the use of arguments and the high quality of the writing. And the price."--Avery Kolers, University of Louisville

"I find this text to be much more useful than Rachels; it nicely combines philosophical sophistication with a clear, appropriate, and engaging writing style and an emphasis on critical reasoning. It comes with very helpful resources including excellent essay exam questions and short quiz checks for the students. It also provides useful discussion questions for each chapter."--Jacquelyn Ann K. Kegley, California State University, Bakersfield

"This marvelously clear book provides a thorough investigation of the most central issues in ethics. It's an ideal text for an undergraduate course in moral philosophy. I'm especially pleased with the resources available to students and faculty (e.g., study questions; chapter introductions and conclusions; exam questions/answer keys)." --Jesse Steinberg, University of Wisconsin-Madison

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Russ Shafer-Landau is Professor of Philosophy and Director of The Parr Center for Ethics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is the author, editor, or coeditor of several books including *The Ethical Life*, Third Edition (OUP, 2014), *Reason and Responsibility*, Fifteenth Edition (2013), and *Ethical Theory: An Anthology*, Second Edition (2012). He is also the editor of *Oxford Studies in Metaethics*.

This is one of the best books on ethics I've ever read, and I've read a lot of books on ethics. It's a book meant for beginners who have little to no experience with moral philosophy, but even professionals or ethics-enthusiasts (like myself) will find much value in this book. It manages to cover an impressive amount of information in a relatively short time, beginning with questions of value, then the various normative ethical views, and ending with meta-ethics. Each chapter is divided into chunks that either explain a position or the arguments for and against it. The companion book is also great, which is a collection of historical ethical literature. I'm still giving it five stars but a gripe I did have was that the final section on meta-ethics was a little sparse. Shafer-Landau focuses primarily on skeptic perspectives of ethics, such as subjectivism, relativism, non-cognitivism and error theory. I wish he would have included something more about moral realism, and maybe even his own realist views. But in general it's not that big of an omission. I can understand why he didn't include some of the more nuanced positions in meta-ethics, like constructivism or Blackburn's quasi-realism, but if you're looking for a book that has more substance in meta-ethics, you might want to complement this book with another one that focuses more on meta-ethics. I personally would recommend "Foundations of Ethics: An Anthology" which is partly edited by Shafer-Landau, as well as "A Companion to Ethics" edited by Singer. But yeah, five stars no question about it. Fantastic book, entertaining and filled with information. Would recommend.

The book is really simple and easy to read. The author exposes the main approaches to ethics, presenting the underlying principles of each in concise formal statements. He always shows the

advantages of each ethical theory followed by arguments against it. The last part of the book deals briefly with metaethics. I recommend for the beginner who seeks a quick and enjoyable understanding of the topic. For that same reason, one shouldn't expect depth in the discussion, and there are very few excerpts from the classical works in moral philosophy.

Shafer-Landau is a wonderful philosopher and writer. He breaks down the topics beautifully and simplistically. It is better for those who are looking to do more upperclasses in ethics than it is for someone just starting out in philosophy.

This book did what I needed it to do, provide me with an introduction to a broad variety of ethical philosophies. It was concise and an easy read. I see in the reviews, there are some disagreements with the author. What would a book of philosophy be if one could not disagree with some element of it? I agree that some of the positions were not properly defended when it came time for the author to attack them, but he generally acknowledged the real holders of those positions would respond to the attacks with more vigor. I felt he misused Occam's razor, but almost everyone does, and he only did it once, so I will forgive him. If you need what I did, a quick and easy introduction to the field, this book will do well.

It is a beautiful illustration of logic. He weaves long-held contentions of philosophy through this rubric and engages students with mental gymnastics. I am less than half way through the book and I cannot put it down. It is great book for college students.

Nothing special

very hard to read.

A++++

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