

Anthony Skelton

‘Practical Ethics in Sidgwick and Kant’

Abstract: Sidgwick claimed Kant as one of his moral philosophical masters. This did not prevent Sidgwick from registering pointed criticisms of most of Kant’s main claims in ethics. This paper explores the practical ethics of Sidgwick and Kant. In I, I outline the element of Kant’s theoretical ethics that Sidgwick endorsed. In II and III, I outline and adjudicate some of their sharpest disagreements in practical ethics, on the permissibility of lying and on the demands of beneficence. In IV, I argue that compared to Kant, Sidgwick has a better strategy for overcoming disagreement in practical ethics. V sums things up.

Readings:

“Practical Ethics in Sidgwick and Kant”, *Kantian and Sidgwickian Ethics: The Cosmos of Duty Above and the Moral Law Within*, eds., Tyler Paytas & Tim Henning (New York: Routledge, 2020), 13-39.

<https://philpapers.org/rec/SKESAK>



Anthony Skelton is Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Western Ontario. He specializes in normative ethics and the history of ethics. He has published articles in *Ethics*, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, and *Utilitas*. He is the co-editor of *Bioethics in Canada*, second edition published by Oxford University Press and the author of *Sidgwick’s Ethics* forthcoming on Cambridge University Press. He is an associate editor of the *Journal for the History of Analytical Philosophy*.

Selected Publications:

“Late Utilitarian Moral Theory and its Development: Sidgwick, Moore”, *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Philosophy*, ed., John Shand (Oxford: Wiley- Blackwell, 2019), 281-310.

“On Henry Sidgwick’s ‘My Station and its Duties’”, *Ethics* 125 (2014), 186-191.

“Henry Sidgwick’s Moral Epistemology”, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 48 (2010), 491-519.