

NATURE VS= CONVENTION IN MORALITY

Most moral philosophers have struggled with the nature vs. convention distinction. It may be argued that this is not a dichotomy: that moral claims are both in the nature of things and conventional (Hampshire 1983). If this is correct, a better opposition--better because it suggests a genuine dichotomy--is that between universal and particular norms, i.e. those based on the needs and expectations of all human beings, and those which are culture-bound (Hampshire 1983). It does not follow that the universal morality, i.e. the intersection of all the particular moralities, is determined/biologically: some moral rules are determined by social intercourse, by the need to preserve certain social groups.

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