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## Between Universalism and Skepticism: Ethics as Social Artifact (Hardback)

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By Michael Philips

Oxford University Press Inc, United States, 1994. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book \*\*\*\*\* Print on Demand \*\*\*\*\*. Philips defends a middle ground between the view that there is a set of standards binding on rational beings as such (universalism) and the view that differences in morals reduce ultimately to matters of taste (skepticism). He begins with a sustained critique of universalist moral theories and of certain familiar approaches to concrete moral questions that presuppose them (most appeals to intuitions, respect-for-persons moralities, and versions of contractarianism and wide reflective equilibrium). He goes on to criticize major recent attempts to develop nonuniversalist alternatives to skepticism, arguing that they rely on excessively abstract and philosophically indefensible preference satisfaction theories of the good. According to Philips's positive alternative, ethics as social artifact, moral codes are social instruments and they are justified to the extent that they effectively do their jobs, which is to promote reasonably valued ways of life. Accordingly, he argues that different standards may be justified for different societies, depending on their circumstances, traditions, and current institutions. His account of a reasonably valued way of life depends on a falsifiability approach to reasonable values according to which...



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