**Key Terms**

*Ethical Choices*, Third Edition

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Chapter 1: Morals and Values

**apply** Something applies for a person if it calls for some response in that person’s particular circumstances; for example, “I should study my chemistry book” applies to me if I am taking chemistry and want to do well.

**descriptive claim** Relating to the world as it is, was, will be, or could be, but not to how it should or ought to be.

**ethical theory** A theory that typically attempts to explain the moral realm on the basis of just one or a few foundational values or principles.

**ethics** (*Part I Introduction*) The systematic exploration of moral right and wrong, good and bad—including the principles and claims that employ these concepts.

**foundational values** A value or value claim (moral or non-moral) that serves as the basis for prescriptions or an entire moral theory.

**good and bad** The normative concepts having to do with values.

**Gyges** A mythical character mentioned by Glaucon in Plato’s *Republic* who finds a ring that makes him invisible, allowing him to commit moral wrongs without getting caught.

**hedonism** A tradition that maintains that there is just one foundational good—pleasure (or happiness)—that may serve as the basis for any action.

**hold** Something holds for a person if it is true or morally binding, regardless of what that person believes or practices; for example, “The earth is round” holds for all.

**instrumental values** Goods that are useful for attaining something else of value; a purely instrumental value has no genuine worth in itself.

**intrinsic values** Goods that are valuable in themselves; values that are not derived from other values.

**moral** Objectively good or right.

**moral realm** Taking “moral” in one of its senses, this is the subject matter of ethics; more generally, this normative realm contains the entire range of moral phenomena, including people’s moral beliefs and practices.

**moral standard** A complete set of moral value and prescriptive claims; together, these dictate what is morally good or bad, right or wrong.

**normative** Relating to some norm or standard; moral values and claims are normative.

prescriptive claim A type of normative statement that tells us what we should or should not do.

**prudential realm** The non-moral normative realm of claims reflecting what is in one’s interest; prudential claims are best expressed in an “if/then” (conditional) form: if some value or goal is important and relevant to you, then you ought to act in a certain way.

**realm of etiquette** The non-moral normative realm that defines acceptable social behavior, or “good manners,” for a given culture.

**realm of law** The non-moral normative realm determined and enforced by a given civil authority; many laws reflect moral claims.

**right and wrong** The normative concepts having to do with actions.

**value claim** What people consider important, what we try to achieve and maintain. Our values drive our choices and actions.

**values** A statement that ascribes values (positive or negative) to something or other.