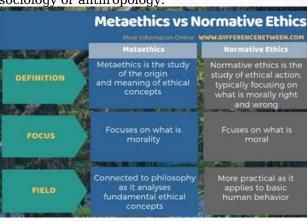
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Normative and descriptive ethics examples

What is descriptive and normative ethics. Difference normative and descriptive ethics. What is an example of normative ethics and descriptive ethics.

Study of people's beliefs about morality. [1] It contrasts with prescriptive ethics, which is the study of ethical terms and theories actually refer to. The following examples of questions that might be considered in each field illustrate the differences between the fields: Descriptive ethics: What does "right" even mean? Normative (prescriptive) ethics: How should people act? Applied ethics: How do we take moral knowledge and put it into practice? Description Descriptive ethics is a form of empirical research into the attitudes of individuals or groups of people. In other words, this is the division of philosophical or general ethics that involves the observation of the moral decision-making process with the goal of describing the phenomenon. Those working on descriptive ethics aim to uncover people's beliefs about such things as values, which actions are right and wrong, and which characteristics of moral agents are virtuous. Research into descriptive ethics may also investigate people's ethical ideals or what actions societies reward or punish in law or politics. What ought to be noted is that culture is generational and not static. Therefore, a new generation will come with its own set of morals and that qualifies to be their ethics because descriptive ethics involves empirical investigation, it is a field that is usually investigated by those working in the fields of evolutionary biology, psychology, sociology or anthropology.



Information that comes from descriptive ethics is, however, also used in philosophical arguments.[2][3] Value theory can be either normative or descriptive. Lawrence Kohlberg: An example of descriptive ethics Lawrence Kohlberg is one example of a psychologist working on descriptive ethics. In one study, for example, Kohlberg questioned a group of boys about what would be a right or wrong action for a man facing a moral dilemma (specifically, the Heinz dilemma): should he steal a drug to save his wife, or refrain from theft even though that would lead to his wife's death?[4] Kohlberg's concern was not which choice the boys made, but the moral reasoning that lay behind their decisions. After carrying out a number of related studies, Kohlberg devised a theory about the development of human moral reasoning actually carried out by the participants in his research.

Kohlberg's research can be classed as descriptive ethics to the extent that he describes human beings' actual moral development.



If, in contrast, he had aimed to describe how humans ought to develop morally, his theory would have involved prescriptive ethics. References ^ "comparative ethics. References

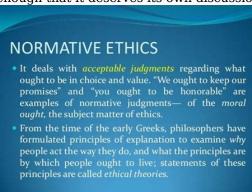
are approaching the topic from a different one of these three categories. Thus, learning what they are and how to recognize them might save you some grief later. The category of describing how people behave and/or what sorts of moral standards they claim to follow.



Descriptive ethics incorporates research from the fields of anthropology, psychology, sociology and history as part of the process of understanding what people do or have believed about moral to figure out what people should do or whether their current moral behavior is reasonable. Traditionally, most of the field of moral philosophy has involved normative ethics - there are few philosophers out there who haven't tried their hand at explaining what they think people should do and why.

Descriptive vs. Normative
 ■ Remember:
 ■ Descriptive theories concern what moral views or practices are <u>ACTUALLT APPLIED or ADOPTED</u> (i.e., what things people BELIEVE to be good, right or virtuous, or what practices they DO have).
 ■ Normative theories concern what moral views or practices are <u>CORRECT</u> (i.e., what things are REALLY good, right or virtuous).

The category of analytic ethics, also often referred to as metaethics, is perhaps the most difficult of the three to understand. In fact, some philosophers disagree as to whether or not it should be considered an independent pursuit, arguing that it should instead be included under Normative Ethics. Nevertheless, it is discussed independently often enough that it deserves its own discussion here. Here are a couple of examples which should help make the difference between descriptive, normative and analytic ethics even clearer.



Descriptive: Different societies have different moral standards. Normative: This action is wrong in this society, but it is right in another. 3. Analytic: Morality is relative. All of these statements are about ethical relativism, the idea that moral standards different from person to person or from society to society. In descriptive ethics, it is simply observed that different societies have different standards - this is a true and factual statement which offers no judgments or conclusions. In normative ethics, a conclusion is drawn from the observation made above, namely that some action is wrong in one society and is right in another. This is a normative claim because it goes beyond simply observing that this action is treated as wrong in one place and treated as right in another. In analytic ethics, an even broader conclusion is drawn from the above, namely that the very nature of morality is that it is relative. This position argues that there are no moral standards independent of our social groups, and hence whatever a social groups, and hence whatever a social groups, there is nothing "above" the group to which we can appeal in order to challenge those standards. 1. Descriptive: People tend to make decisions which bring pleasure or avoid pain. 2. Normative: The moral decision is that which enhances wellbeing and limits suffering. 3. Analytic: Morality is simply a system for helping humans stay happy and alive. All of these statements refer to the moral philosophy commonly known as utilitarianism. The first, from descriptive ethics, simply makes the observation that when it comes to making moral choices, people have a tendency to go with whatever option makes them feel better or, at the very least, they avoid whichever option causes them problems or pain.

This observation may or may not be true, but it does not attempt to derive any conclusions as to how people should behave. The second statement, from normative ethics, does attempt to derive a normative conclusion - namely, that the most moral choices are those which tend to enhance our well-being, or at the very least limit our pain and suffering. This represents an attempt to create a moral standard, and as such, must be treated differently from the observation made previously. The third statement, from analytic ethics, draws yet a further conclusion based upon the previous two and is the very nature of morality itself. Instead of arguing, as in the previous example, that morals are all relative, this one makes a claim about the purpose of morals - namely, that moral exist simply to keep us happy and alive.