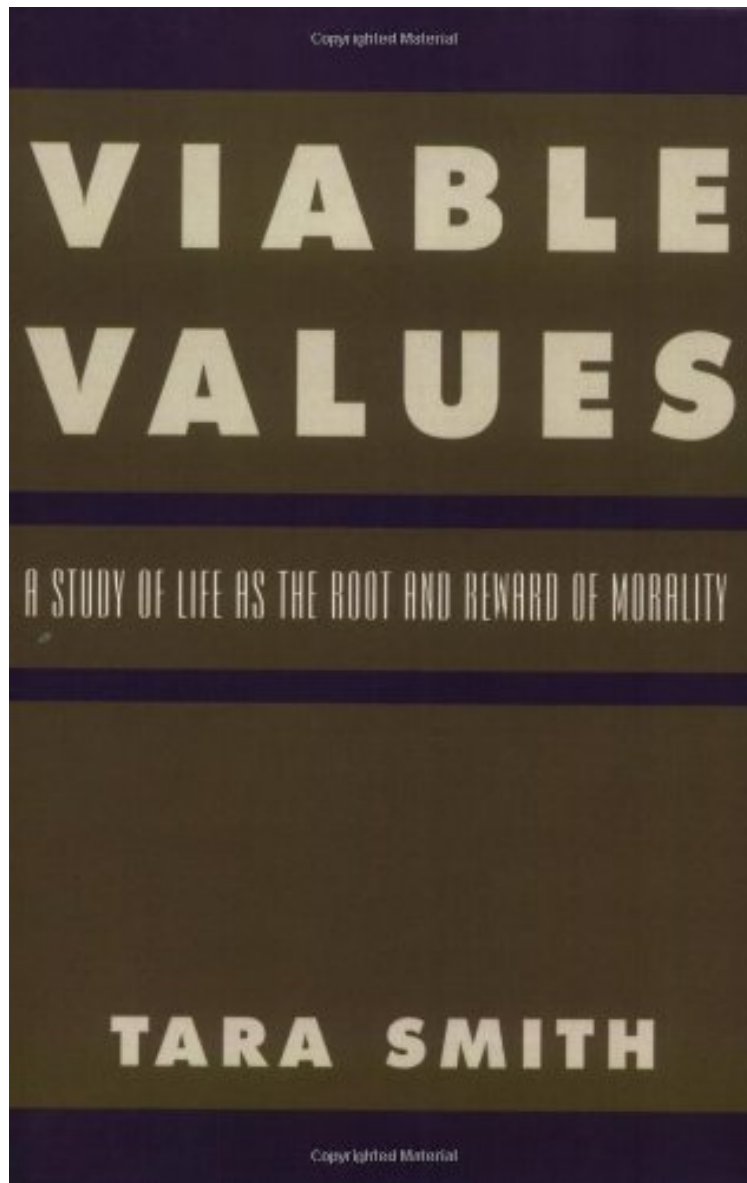


Viable Values: A Study of Life as the Root and Reward of Morality

Von Tara Smith

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Von Tara Smith : Viable Values: A Study of Life as the Root and Reward of Morality before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Viable Values: A Study of Life as the Root and Reward of Morality:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. The Objectivist theory of value -- holes and all.Von John S. RyanTara Smith here tries to make the best possible case for

the Objectivist theory of "value." She does a fairly good job, and she is surely right to make "life" in some way the standard of value for ethical purposes. But I do not see that she has improved on Rand in her formulation of this point. As another reviewer notes, Smith's answer to the question "Why be moral?" is, "You should be moral because you have chosen to live." And this is indeed Rand's answer. But it is not without troubles of its own. Suppose I have chosen to die; is it really true that "anything goes"? Is my decision to take a few hundred children with me really just "amoral," or is it positively immoral? If the latter, then my own reasons for being moral are not exhausted in my own choice "to live." In short, neither Rand nor Smith (nor any other Objectivist) has yet managed to mount a case for ethics that really includes what most of us mean by "rights." Your rights, if they have any moral existence or meaning at all, must provide me with reasons for refraining from treating you in certain ways independently of my alleged decision "to live." Of course, Objectivism would say my decision to die is "immoral" too. But (a) this is inconsistent with Objectivism's basic view of morality as presented by both Rand and Smith; on that view, in strict logic, the decision to die can be immoral-for-me only if I have already, *contra hypothesis*, decided to live. And (b) it still doesn't meet the objection I mentioned above, that the moral constraints imposed by your "rights" still apply to me even if I'm irrevocably suicidal. The entire Objectivist approach to ethics needs to be re-thought from scratch. I'm afraid Smith hasn't yet accomplished that task.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Superb Defense of a Life-Based Morality Von psychophile Why be moral? Prof. Smith's "Viable Values" provides the most comprehensive answer to this question that I've seen. Although Smith unapologetically follows the philosophy of the late Ayn Rand, she does not simply recapitulate Rand's position. First, Smith provides an original defense of Rand's question "Why does man need a code of values?" Second, she utterly demolishes the life/flourishing dichotomy through a series of extended, thoroughly analyzed examples. But the most rewarding section contains an illuminating analysis of why ill-begotten gains are not values. Her analysis here is explicit enough that it should allow readers to identify how *any* con-artist must be self-defeating. As an aside, I can't help but defend Smith's thesis against one silly objection--that she provides no reason for an irrevocably suicidal person to live morally. Her answer would be simple: If morality is the art of living well, then a person irrevocably committed to suicide has no more reason to act morally than a person irrevocably committed to poverty has reason to invest wisely. The *reason* to practice any code of action (whether morality or the art of finance) is the acceptance of the *goal* of that practice (whether it be life or wealth). Thus, demanding an ethics that will compel moral action from those who seek never to act again is akin to demanding an economics that will compel good investments from those who've taken a vow of poverty. Following Smith's argument, if you meet an *irrevocably* suicidal airline pilot, don't get on his plane; if you meet a monk who dabbles in the stock market, don't give him a dime to invest. There's no hole in the logic that leads to "seek a pilot who loves life and an investor who loves profits."

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Rigorous Presentation of a proper Metaethics Von Customer The basic question asked in this book is: Why be moral? The author, Prof. Tara Smith reviews and critiques the various historical positions on this question before providing what I consider the only valid answer. This was the answer provided by novelist/philosopher Ayn Rand as part of her Objectivist philosophy. Prof. Smith writes in the last two sentences of the book: "Life sets the standard of value, life is the goal of morality, life is the reward of morality. What stronger answer can one imagine to the question of why we should be moral?" The meat of the book is devoted to detailed argumentation for the above points and a reader would be well rewarded by carefully reading through those chapters. This book is a must for moral philosophy courses.

Kurzbeschreibung Viable Values examines the most basic foundations of value and morality, demonstrating the shortcomings of major traditional views and proposing that morality is grounded in the objective requirements of human life. Smith argues that morality depends on a proper understanding of the concept of values, and that values depend on the alternative of life or death. She proposes that human beings need to be moral in order to live, explaining how life is the standard of morality, how flourishing is the proper end and reward of living morally, and how an intelligent egoism is the path to flourishing.

Pressestimmen To my mind, this is one of the most interesting works in ethics to have appeared in a long while. Tara Smith's book ought to win many new adherents to the proposition that morality should be in the service of life, and not the reverse.--Lester H. Hunt, University of Wisconsin-Madison

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