

ROOTS OF MORAL PRINCIPLES

Moral principles have three systems of roots: biological, social, and rational. ^{Cognitive}

Biological roots: empathy and need of mutual protection

Social roots: wish to be treated fairly and equitably (which calls for reciprocity), responsibility in handling a job (required by division of labor), utility (expectancy of reward), need to keep society together, protection against selfishness and excessive competition,

^{Cognitive constraints}
Rational roots: statesmen, legislators and philosophers have sometimes suggested or introduced moral reforms on the basis of moral and sociological arguments--e.g. that the death penalty is counterproductive because it invites criminals to eliminate possible witnesses.

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