

Metamorality Is Morality Write Large: Reflections on *Moral Tribes*

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Abstract: In *Moral Tribes*, Joshua Greene argues that we can make progress on the big moral problems that confront us, and that have proven intractable to moral debate, by ascending to the metamoral level, at which we invoke utilitarian considerations alone. I advance two objections to Greene's project. First, I argue that it is more difficult than he recognizes to distinguish between those metamoral judgments that are deserving of our respect and the moral judgments he would have us set aside. Since there are no extramoral standards to invoke in distinguishing moral responses from one another, we must embark on the hard philosophical work of theory construction to make such distinctions, rather than look to the sciences to do the work for us. Second, I argue that even if we were to ascend to the metamoral level, our propensity to engage in motivated reasoning would simply replicate the impasse in a slightly more sophisticated form.

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