Negate means “**to nullify**”[[1]](#footnote-1) so any argument proving the resolution not true is sufficient to negate. The affirmative burden is to defend the truth value of the resolution because it’s the only stable and predictable basis for neg ground. All I have before the round is the text of the resolution and not his specific advocacy, meaning it’s all I can be expected to link to.

History shows widespread moral disagreement and no signs of moral progress.

**Leiter 10** writes[[2]](#footnote-2)

With respect to very particularized moral disagreements — e.g., about questions of economic or social policy — which often trade on obvious factual ignorance or disagreement about complicated empirical questions, this seems a plausible retort. But **for over two hundred years, Kantians and utilitarians have been developing** increasingly **systematic** versions of their respective **positions.** The **Aristotelian** tradition in moral **philosophy has an even longer history.** Utilitarians have become particularly adept at explaining how they can accommodate Kantian and Aristotelian intuitions about particular cases and issues, though in ways that are usually found to be systematically unpersuasive to the competing traditions and which, in any case, do nothing to dissolve the disagreement about the underlying moral criteria and categories. Philosophers in each tradition increasingly talk only to each other, without even trying to convince those in the other traditions. And while there may well be ‘progress’ within traditions — e.g., most utilitarians regard Mill as an improvement on Bentham—**there does not appear to be any progress in moral theory**, in the sense of a consensus that particular fundamental theories of right action and the good life are deemed better than their predecessors. **What we find** now **are simply** the **competing traditions** — Kantian, Humean, Millian, Aristotelian, Thomist, perhaps now even Nietzschean — who often view their competitors as unintelligible or morally obtuse, but don’t have any actual arguments against the foundational principles of their competitors. There is, in short, no sign — I can think of none — that we are heading towards any epistemic rapprochement between these competing moral traditions. **Are we** really **to believe that hyper-rational and reflective** moral **philosophers**, whose lives, in most cases, are devoted to systematic reflection on philosophical questions, many of whom (historically) were independently wealthy (or indifferent to material success) and so immune to crass considerations of livelihood and material self-interest, and most of **who**m, in the modern era, **spend** professional **careers refining their positions**, and have been doing so as a professional class in university settings for well over a century — are we really supposed to believe that they **have reached no** substantial **agreement** on any foundational moral principle **because of ignorance**, irrationality, **or partiality?**

Moral anti-realism best explains moral disagreement. We can’t reach consensus because morality is just a psychological bias, not an objective truth. **Leiter 10** writes[[3]](#footnote-3)

Here’s how the Nietzschean explanation might go. The existence of incompatible moral philosophies providing dialectical justifications for moral propositions is best explained as follows: (1) there are no objective facts about fundamental moral propositions, such that (2) it is possible to construct apparent dialectical justifications for moral propositions, even though (3) **the best explanation for these theories is** not that their dialectical justifications are sound but **that they answer** to **the psychological needs of philosophers. And the** reason it is possible to construct “apparent” dialectical **justification for differing moral propositions is** because, given **the diversity of psychological needs** of persons (including philosophers), it is always possible to find people for whom the premises of these dialectical justifications are acceptable. **The** alternative, **“moral realist” explanation** for the data—the data being the existence of incompatible philosophical theories about morality—**is both less simple and less consilient. First,** of course, **it posits** the existence of **moral facts which**, according to the more familiar best-explanation argument I have defended elsewhere (“Moral Facts and Best Explanations” in E.F. Paul et al. (eds.), Moral Knowledge [Oxford: Blackwell, 2001]), **are not part of the best explanation of other phenomena. Second,** the moral realist must suppose that this class of explanatorily narrow **moral facts are undetected by** large number of **philosophers who are otherwise** deemed to be **rational and epistemically informed. Third,** the moral realist must explain why **there is a failure of convergence under** what appear (and purport) to be **epistemically ideal conditions of sustained philosophical inquiry** and reflective contemplation **across millennia.** We can agree with Peter Railton that we lack “canons of induction so powerful that experience would, in the limit, produce convergence on matters of fact among all epistemic agents, no matter what their starting points” (“Moral Realism,” Philosophical Review [1986]), and still note that there exists a remarkable cross-cultural consensus among theorists about fundamental physical laws, principles of chemistry, and biological explanations, as well as mathematical truths, while moral philosophers, to this very day, find no common ground on foundational principles even within the West, let alone cross-culturally.

1. The American Heritage Dictionary, “Negate.” 4th ed. Houghton Mifflin Company. Updated in 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Leiter, Brian (Karl N. Llewellyn Professor of Jurisprudence at the University of Chicago Law School). “Moral Skepticism and Moral Disagreement: Developing an Argument from Nietzsche.” On the Human, sponsored by the National Humanities Center. March 25th, 2010. <http://onthehuman.org/2010/03/moral-skepticism-and-moral-disagreement-developing-an-argument-from-nietzsche/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)