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"Postmodernism, Value and Objectivity"

Attfield, Robin

Attfield, Robin. "Postmodernism, Value and Objectivity." *Environmental Values* 10, no. 2 (2001): 145–62. doi:10.3197/096327101129340787 .

The first half of this paper replies to three postmodernist challenges to belief in objective intrinsic value. One lies in the claim that the language of objective value presupposes a flawed, dualistic distinction between subjects and objects. The second lies in the claim that there are no objective values which do not arise within and/or depend upon particular cultures or valuational frameworks. The third comprises the suggestion that belief in objective values embodies the representational theory of perception. In the second half, a defence is offered of belief in objective intrinsic value. Objectivists hold that axiological properties supply interpersonal reasons for action for any relevant moral agent. The intrinsically valuable is understood as what there is reason to desire, cherish or foster in virtue of the nature of the state or object concerned. The concept of intrinsic value is shown to be instantiated, and defended against a range of criticisms.
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