THE PARAMETERS OF BEING AND ACTING HUMAN:
THE TRUE CASE FOR MORAL SCIENCE
IN
THE PHILOSOPHY OF SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS

by

Anthony Santamaria

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctorate
Graduate Department of Philosophy
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Anthony Santamaria, 1999
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L’auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author’s permission.

L’auteur conserve la propriété du droit d’auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-41305-5
Abstract

The following dissertation bears an historical theme: the 'true' interpretation of a moral theory advanced during the Middle Ages, and how and why this theory is misinterpreted in the modern context. Yet this historical theme is embedded within a systematic one: whether it can be validly demonstrated that moral science is legitimate. Hence, the first two sections of the discussion are exclusively systematic in orientation. They are concerned with what general criteria must be met in order for ethics to be deemed a legitimate science, with the problems confronting any attempt to meet these criteria, and with the apparent failure of the conventional methods contrived to resolve such problems.

It is in the third of five sections that a specifically historical subject is undertaken, but only because it is seen as relevant to the dissertation's systematic objective. Within the third section, three hypotheses are advanced: [1]. that the legitimacy of moral science can be validly demonstrated; [2]. that
the moral philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas can be shown to facilitate such a demonstration; and [3]. that this philosophy has been misunderstood by some modern interpreters. The remaining two sections of the discussion are devoted to proving such hypotheses.

For example, the fourth section examines and deconstructs two prominent modern interpretations of Thomistic ethics; this section uncovers the inadequacies present in the views of certain modern Thomists, and exposes important details pertaining to the true nature and validity of Aquinas' moral theory.

The fifth section concentrates solely upon the latter theory, especially upon its metaphysical foundations. Here, the discussion illustrates the framework in which such a theory is wrought, and expounds the general validity of the arguments which comprise it.

Overall, the following dissertation has two main ambitions, both of which are pursued within the context of the systematic theme of whether the legitimacy of moral science is validly demonstrable. The first of these ambitions is to show that St. Thomas Aquinas provides such a demonstration, and to show how he does so. The second ambition is to explain how and why this demonstration has been misrepresented by modern philosophers. In the final analysis, whether these two ambitions are successfully realized is, of course, left for the reader to decide....
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface ........................................................................................................................................... 1

Section One: Science, Pseudo-Science, and the Pursuit of Ethics .................................................. 6

Section Two: The Problem of the Objectivity of Ethics .................................................................. 25
   [i]. Naturalism .......................................................................................................................... 32
   [ii]. Non-Naturalism .................................................................................................................. 56

Section Three: A General Hypothesis and Critique ...................................................................... 75
   [i]. Some General Remarks About Going Astray ...................................................................... 83
   [ii]. The Naturalism and Non-naturalism of Aquinas ............................................................... 92
   [iii]. Moral Error and Disparity from the Thomistic Standpoint .............................................. 107

Section Four: Specific Insights and Specific Errors ...................................................................... 126
   [A]. Naturalists: Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump .................................................... 126
   [B]. A Non-naturalist: Germain Grisez .................................................................................... 149
      [i]. Grisez’ Non-naturalism .................................................................................................... 152
      [ii]. Grisez and “Scholastic Natural Law Theory” ............................................................ 161
      [iii]. The Invalid Naturalism of “Scholastic Natural Law Theory” ..................................... 169
      [iii]. Grisez’s First Mistakes: The True Naturalism of Aquinas ........................................ 181
      [iv]. Grisez’s Ultimate Mistake: The Need for Naturalism ................................................ 203

Section Five: God, Creation and Morality ...................................................................................... 216
   [i]. The Philosophical Creationism of Aquinas ........................................................................ 222
   [ii]. The Metaphysics of Philosophical Creationism ............................................................... 233
   [iii]. Philosophical Creationism and the Naturalism of Aquinas ........................................... 242

Conclusion ..................................................................................................................................... 258

Notes To Section One ................................................................................................................... 276
Notes To Section Two .................................................................................................................. 278
Notes To Section Three .............................................................................................................. 281
Notes To Section Four ............................................................................................................... 285
Notes To Section Five ............................................................................................................... 293

Bibliography ................................................................................................................................ 300
Preface

Ever since Pope Leo XIII heralded the indelible value of Thomism in his encyclical letter of August 4, 1879, the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas has been the subject of intensive scrutiny, and more often than not, of intensive polemic. Excluding the metaphysics of Aquinas, especially that pertaining to his philosophical creationism, the area of St. Thomas' thought which has garnered perhaps the most attention and the most controversy has been his ethics.

Indeed, while there tends to be unanimous agreement among his modern commentators that Aquinas explicitly endorses the legitimacy of moral science, or more specifically, that he is an advocate of objectivism, realism, and absolutism in ethics, there is significant disagreement with regard to how exactly he argues in support of these positions. How does St. Thomas demonstrate that moral facts, properties, and principles exist independently of people's beliefs about morality? What is the basis for his view that the truth-value of moral propositions is demonstrable? And how does he establish the necessity and universality of moral principles?

Two divergent schools of thought appear to have emerged within modern Thomistic scholarship in the attempt to answer such questions. The first school of thought, espoused by thinkers such
as Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, holds that Aquinas' approach to ethics is fundamentally naturalistic, i.e., that he investigates moral goodness as a natural property, and that his arguments in support of ethical objectivism, realism, and absolutism are derived from, and so dependent upon, discoveries in his speculative philosophy, primarily his metaphysics and philosophy of nature. In contrast, the second school of thought, advanced by philosophers such as Germain Grisez, holds that Aquinas' approach to ethics is fundamentally non-naturalistic, i.e., that Aquinas regarded moral knowledge as a priori, and so recognized and endorsed the autonomy or independence of ethics from speculative philosophy in his arguments supporting ethical objectivism, realism, and absolutism.

Confronted with these ostensibly incompatible views regarding the nature of Aquinas' moral theory, the student of Thomism is likely to ponder the following three questions: [1]. How can one and the same moral philosophy spawn such disparate interpretations?; [2]. What is the correct interpretation of Thomistic ethics, and why?; and finally, [3]. Provided that one can arrive at a correct interpretation of Thomistic ethics, primarily with regard to its general theory in support of ethical objectivism, realism, and absolutism, are the arguments sustaining that theory valid, especially in the light of certain problems which have plagued modern attempts to construct comparable
Theories?

The following discussion is dedicated to uncovering the answers to such questions. As submitted above, in very general terms, what is at issue is how St. Thomas argues in support of the legitimacy of moral science, [insofar as the subject matter of a legitimate science must admit of objectivity, intelligibility, universality, and necessity], and whether such an argument is valid. In this regard, my hypothesis is that Aquinas, inspired by Aristotelianism, provides an all-encompassing meta-ethical system by which he provides the basis for the objectivism, realism, and absolutism of his moral doctrine.

To explain how Aquinas succeeds, I shall have to explain how he resolves certain obstacles which have beset the modern pursuit of ethics: problems relating primarily to issues of ethical objectivity and the relation of fact to value. In the process, I shall also need to convey why prominent modern interpretations of Thomistic ethics are incorrect. But I must first discuss the general criteria which must be met for ethics to be deemed a legitimate science at all. Only then can I establish the framework in which it can be shown that Thomistic ethics fulfils these criteria.

As a result, I have divided the following discussion into five progressive sections. As indicated, the first section will involve a brief overview of what is basically required for any
science, [in the classical sense of that term], to be deemed feasible or legitimate, in order to determine, very generally, what is needed for a legitimate science of normative ethics. The second section will explore what, from the modern standpoint, are the principal difficulties standing in the way of fulfilling this need, and how modern ethics has responded, and apparently failed, in its attempts to overcome them. The third and fourth sections, which are transitional, will investigate how such a failure has contributed to thwarting modern efforts to correctly interpret Aquinas' moral philosophy. Naturally, these sections will be followed by what I shall offer as the correct interpretation of Thomistic ethics. As a result, my fifth and final section will explain how Aquinas, inspired both by Aristotelianism as well as by some important philosophical discoveries of his own, develops a moral theory which, provided the truth of its presuppositions, appears to succeed in showing how and why a science of normative ethics is ultimately tenable.

Overall, perhaps the most important element of the latter discussion will be my argument for the connection between natural philosophy, metaphysics and ethics in the Thomistic system. This connection is often misunderstood, and even denied by some modern Thomists, or where understood, it does not appear to be fully gauged by them. The result is that the modern world seems to have but a piecemeal grasp of Thomistic ethics, despite intensive
scrutiny. The basic task of the following discussion is to attempt to put such pieces together.

* * * * * * * *
Section One: Science, Pseudo-Science, and the Pursuit of Ethics

Generally speaking, two factors determine the viability of any science: (1) it must have a legitimate subject matter, and (2) that subject matter must be knowable. By "legitimate subject matter" I mean a subject of inquiry which is both objectively real and universal in scope. For instance, there obviously cannot be a science of "square-circles", for these cannot really exist; there is nothing into which to inquire. What is less obvious is that neither can there be a science of individual or particular natural objects, say of a particular tree or stone, precisely as individual and particular. Nor can there be a science of what is in itself wholly "subjective", or of what is defined as a state of affairs exclusive to, or wholly determined by, the beliefs and feelings of individual human beings.

Since the object of any scientific inquiry is always what is universal, it follows that neither the individual natural object as such, nor the purely subjective state of affairs can qualify as the object of science. The reasons for this are rarely made plain, and are usually taken for granted by those who pursue scientific investigations; nonetheless, for the purposes of the present discussion, they warrant examination. And in this regard, perhaps the best place to begin is with the views of Aristotle, who was arguably the world's first true philosopher of science, and whose
position continues to represent the cornerstone even of the modern concept of science, as well as the modern understanding of what constitutes the scope of scientific inquiry.

* * * *

In Chapter One of Book Alpha of the Metaphysics, after having established the general postulate that all human beings desire understanding for its own sake, Aristotle goes on to discuss, and subsequently establish what, in effect, amounts to a hierarchy of knowledge. On the lowest rung of this hierarchy, he places "sensation", a form of cognitive activity we share with all other animals, and which, as is implicit in Chapter One of Book Alpha of the Metaphysics, and explicit in Book III, Chapter Eight of De Anima, the philosopher acknowledges as the foundation of all knowledge; he states in the latter text: "No one can ever learn or understand anything without sensing anything".

Above sensation come first "memory" and then "experience", both of which we also have in common with animals. Memory corresponds to the recollection of sensation. Experience, on the other hand, involves the reflection on one, or several memories, and the formation thereby of familiarity with a particular individual or circumstance, and its more prominent characteristics. In other words, experience involves making something of your memories. Unlike memory, experience is projective: it pertains to the ability to make something out of a
past event.

Animals, it would appear, have experience, for they are able to recognize individuals. However, animals, unlike human beings, appear to be incapable of experiences in terms of universals. It is this capacity which leads us into the realm of art and science.

If knowledge of individuals pertains to experience, then knowledge of universals pertains to art and to science. And since, as Aristotle states in Chapter 2 of Book Alpha of the \textit{Metaphysics}, scientific knowledge, [and so too, artistic], is knowledge of things in terms of their "causes", someone who has scientific knowledge, and/or artistic knowledge, as opposed to simply experience, knows why something works, or is the way it is, and not just that it works, or is the way it is.

In the \textit{Physics}, Aristotle carefully determines that there are essentially four different kinds of causes operative in reality: material, formal, efficient, and final. The fact that there are four causes means that a thing can be known, understood, or explained in as many as, [though not necessarily in], four different ways; indeed, that the knowledge of the thing, [and the thing itself from the perspective of the knower], is divisible according to the causes of the thing. Furthermore, while there can be a maximum of only four kinds of causes determining any one thing, these causes can be many in mode or order, [though not infinite in mode], as arranged on the basis their logical
priority and posteriority. Thus, to know a thing scientifically is not only to know what its causes are, but to know the mode of these: their logical priority and posteriority in the determination of the thing, including, ultimately, the first causes.

Generally speaking, the method or way in which the thing is divisible, knowable, and arrangeable according to its causes seems, for Aristotle, to fall into one of two groups or categories,¹¹ [and these same categories still form part of the foundation of scientific inquiry today, with such longevity perhaps implying that they are indeed most fundamental]. Either the thing will be causally or principally analyzed via the determination of its composition, or what its "parts", "elements", and "constituents" are, or, the thing will be causally analyzed via the determination of what it is by nature, [i.e. its kind or class, or how it is distinguished from other things], both generically and specifically. The former method is helpful in determining the material principles and causes of a thing: "what it is made of".¹⁵ The latter method is helpful in establishing the formal [and in some respects, efficient and final] causes of a thing: respectively, its "formula" or definition, what generated it, and what function, end, or purpose it serves, [if any].¹⁵

There is, however, an important distinction made by Aristotle between art, (techne), and science [or at least, deductive
science, episteme]. Both involve an understanding of things in terms of their causes, but art will generally involve a knowledge of the most proximate causes, while science will often pertain to a knowledge of the more remote cause, including, of course, the first cause.

To better explain this distinction, let me offer the following example. Within the medical profession, there exist a variety of disciplines, each ranging in scope and complexity. At one extreme, let us say we have the "herbalist": such a person has perhaps the most rudimentary understanding of medicine; he may know, for example, that "oat bran" is beneficial for the treatment of certain digestive ailments, but not know exactly how or why - i.e. what exactly it is about oat bran, or about the human digestive system that entails their combination to have a certain effect.

Next, in about the middle of two extremes, let us place the "general practitioner": this person would understand the "how" and "why" that the herbalist does not understand; the former has a fairly involved knowledge of the pathology of human ailments, human biology and anatomy, and prescriptive medicine.

Finally, at the other extreme, let us place the "neurologist": such a person seeks out causes far more remote than either the herbalist or the general practitioner; the former will have a much more sophisticated knowledge of human biology and
anatomy, especially with regard to the human nervous system, and the selective pathologies of ailments related to it.

Aristotle, then, was quite sensitive to the concept that there are varying degrees to which one can understand the causes of a thing, and founded his distinction between art and science primarily on this concept, [though not exclusively so]. For Aristotle, [and for Aquinas after him], science surpasses art in that it attempts to explain fully and to define; it delves "deeper", and seeks to obtain a certain and complete account of its subject.

Now as seen, Aristotle held that the individual or particular natural object is the subject of "experience", not science. Needless to say, this does not mean that the individual does not figure at all within scope of scientific inquiry, just that it does not do so qua individual, but only in terms of the universal principles or causes which govern and explain it. The question of course, is why is this the case? Why is the object of science what is universal, why can it not be the individual or particular natural object as such? It is one thing for Aristotle to observe that science does not, in fact, deal with individual natural objects as such, but only with the universal principles which account for them, [an observation which is no doubt accurate], but it is another thing for him to explain why.

Much of this explanation is provided in some rather arduous
passages from Chapter 2 of Book Epsilon of the *Metaphysics* and Chapter 30 of Book 1 of the *Posterior Analytics* where the philosopher argues that the individual or particular natural object, due to its accidental attributes, is governed by "chance causes", from which it follows that, strictly speaking, scientific knowledge of it is impossible. What does this mean? It means that since science seeks to fully explain things in terms of their causes, its objective is to determine those causes, and so it is naturally limited to the causes of a thing which are, in fact, determinate and intelligible. These are the universal causes, those which are stable and constant.

Aristotle recognizes that the particular or individual natural object qua individual is always to some degree in a state of flux or instability, and so the principles or causes which govern it qua individual are constantly changing. This makes that object, and those principles impossible to isolate; they are always uncertain and indefinable, for they are perpetually changing, and so indefinite in themselves. Clearly, one cannot obtain a definition when there is no actual definitiveness in that which one is attempting to define. What is universal or constant, then, as manifest in the particular, is the object of science: "what is always or for the most part".

From the foregoing, it also follows that, strictly speaking, a science of what is purely subjective is also impossible. It has
been shown that something which in itself is indeterminate, indefinite, or unstable cannot be an object of science, and this is also the case with something which is purely subjective. Something is defined as purely subjective, or what one might call a "subjective fact", if it does not exist independently of people's beliefs and feelings, i.e., if it has no existential status outside the minds of individual people. In other words, a subjective fact refers to what is exclusively the domain of individual people's thoughts and feelings, or to the contents of those thoughts and feelings which do not reflect an actual state of affairs in the extra-mental world, but only purport to do so, or do so only from the standpoint of some individual person, or group of persons.

Hence, what is purely subjective is relative to people's beliefs and feelings, and since what people think and feel, even about the same matters, can differ among different people, and can always change, what is purely subjective in itself does not qualify, like the individual people themselves, as an object of science. In themselves, subjective facts are "relative facts"; and as changeable, they are not constant, but unstable, and so indeterminate and indefinite: they can and do change, and perhaps more importantly, they can vary from subject to subject.

Consider, for example, a simple matter of aesthetic taste: whether a certain food, say "lasagna", does or does not taste
better than another food, "Peking Duck". Let us say that some people propose that lasagna does indeed taste better than Peking Duck; others propose that the converse is true. From a scientific standpoint, the following question may arise: "Does or does not lasagna taste better than Peking Duck?". Such a question may, of course, be complicated by the fact that sometimes those who generally prefer lasagna find it undesirable, and favor Peking Duck instead, while the others occasionally find themselves "in the mood for Italian", and reverse their original stance.

As a result, the answer to the question of whether lasagna tastes better than Peking Duck is scientifically indeterminate; the superiority or inferiority of the taste of lasagna relative to Peking Duck varies or is indefinite, and thus it cannot be an object of scientific inquiry. That the taste of lasagna is better or worse than Peking Duck is neither wholly certain, nor wholly intelligible: the taste is both better and worse at the same time, and sometimes it can be better to those who claim it is worse, and vice-versa. Once again, there is nothing wholly stable and definite for the mind to grasp. And thus, what is purely subjective, as it is open to relativity, variation, and instability, cannot serve as a legitimate subject matter of science.

The latter argument should not be construed, of course, as meaning that a science of the phenomenon of some subjective or
relative state of affairs is impossible. Clearly, that people have beliefs and feelings, and that the contents of these beliefs and feelings can reflect subjective or relative facts, are themselves objective facts about the world. The universal principles and causes governing or explaining these facts can serve as legitimate subjects for sciences such as modern psychology, sociology, anthropology, aesthetics, and descriptive ethics.

Indeed, in so far as people's beliefs and feelings and their contents are real or objective attributes of human beings, they can be included in sciences describing human beings and the human condition. But this is not the same as treating any subjective or relative state of affairs which is determined by people's beliefs and feelings as though it somehow reflects an objective fact about the world apart from human beings. While the phenomenon of the subjective or relative can be studied scientifically, the subjective or relative in itself cannot.

In the example cited above, it is certainly possible for one to engage in a scientific inquiry of the objective phenomena consisting of people's attitudes toward the taste of lasagna versus the taste of Peking Duck. But as seen, it is not possible for one to determine scientifically which of these attitudes is really correct, or which food really is preferable. This is because, in such a case, none of the attitudes is really correct, [i.e. actually correct apart from what people believe and feel],
and neither of the foods really is preferable. There is nothing objectively real or factual to investigate in such matters, and whatever is subjectively or relatively factual in them is variable and unstable, and so in itself indeterminate and indefinite, which again points out that it cannot serve as a legitimate subject matter of science.

* * * *

But having a legitimate subject matter, one which is objectively real, and universal in scope, is not sufficient to show that a science of it is viable. As said, a second criterion must also be met: for a science to be viable, its "legitimate subject matter" must be knowable or accessible to human beings.

For example, during the seventeenth century A.D., an atomic or nuclear science, as present during the twentieth century A.D., was not possible or would not have been a legitimate or viable science. Although atoms really existed during the seventeenth century, [mostly the same atoms which exist today], and although their universal characteristics also existed at that time, human technology had not evolved to the point that the existence of atoms and their universal characteristics could actually be grasped. Of course, they were always "knowable in themselves" in the generic sense of "able to be known", for otherwise we could have never come to know them. But at that time, although knowable
in themselves, we were unable to know them. Indeed, to offer a more recent example, at present, a science of Martian life is not a legitimate or feasible science, even if there should be, or at some time was, life on mars, as long as human beings are not in a position to apprehend it.

The latter examples serve to express one sense in which a subject of inquiry may be "unknowable" in such a way as to render a science of it impossible. The examples point to a deficiency or limitation in the ability of the knower to grasp or entertain a subject which, nevertheless, is able to be known in itself. This deficiency or limitation in the knower may or may not be surmountable. It may be the case, as in atomic science or Martian biology, that the scope of human perception can be expanded, if not immediately, then over time, and after considerable effort. The prior deficiency or limitation could then be regarded as accidental or incidental to the knower, i.e., as owing largely to external conditions. But what if the deficiency is substantial or essential? What if the very nature of human perception precludes the ability to know or perceive certain subjects? Indeed, what if the nature of the subjects themselves makes them unintelligible to human beings? Apparently, this would mean that a science of such subjects is impossible, but would it necessarily mean this?

To answer this question, a number of distinctions must be made. First, a distinction between direct and indirect
intelligibility is warranted. What a human being may be unable to grasp or apprehend directly, due to some natural limitation in human beings, he may be able to apprehend indirectly.

For example, the potentiality existing in some leaves, by which they turn from green to red in certain climates during autumn, is not directly intelligible to human beings; we do not directly apprehend the potency itself. Nevertheless, it is indirectly intelligible. We recognize that the leaves must have such a potency, given the fact that they do indeed change colour. And of course, part of the reasoning behind such a recognition is the fact that it is contradictory for something to come into being, without it having been possible for it to come into being.

To this distinction between what is directly and indirectly intelligible, a further distinction may be added: the difference between apprehending that something is, [or is not], and apprehending what it is. These two kinds of apprehension are not necessarily co-extensive. Knowing or recognizing that something exists, or that it does not exist, does not imply that one knows what it is, its nature or definition; nor does knowing what something is, imply that one knows that it exists.

For example, if one were able to show that a certain state of affairs was the effect of some cause, the existence of the cause would be intelligible, but not necessarily its nature. Indeed, if one were to enter a room in which one had previously observed the
white tile floor to be unsoiled, only to find subsequently that it is covered with "muddy footprints", and one recognized that the actualization of the potency for "being soiled", which existed in floor, required a cause, [i.e., a prior and external act], since a potency cannot actualize itself, [as this would contradict its condition as potential], one would know that something caused the footprints. But this does not mean that one would know the nature of that cause, exactly who or what it is [or was] in itself.

It seems, then, that one can know that something exists, without knowing fully what it is. And the converse is also possible: one can know what something is, and not know whether it is, i.e., whether it exists. And one may even know that something does not or cannot exist, and still have knowledge of its nature.

For example, as Aquinas states, one can know "what a man is, or a phoenix, and not know whether these exist in reality", i.e., whether they exist extra-mentally as discreet entities, [and one may also be reasonably certain that the phoenix does not so exist]. Furthermore, modern physicists and astronomers often hypothesize the possible existence of certain astronomical or physical phenomena, such as the existence of quantum singularities, and of quarks; they can define these, but they do not thereby know that they really do exist. Finally, one can even know the definition of "beings of reason", things that can exist only in the mind, such as "spherical-cubes" or the aforementioned
"square-circles". One can define them: e.g., a square-circle is "a parallelogram with four equal sides and four right-angles, bounded by a curved line every point of which is equally distant from the centre". And yet, one can be absolutely certain that such a being does not really exist, since its real existence is impossible, in light of its contradictory nature.

Indeed, it seems that understanding the nature of any finite or contingent entity never includes knowing that it exists, since the entity, as contingent, does not have to exist, whereby it follows that existence is not an essential attribute of it, one that would be included in its definition. And therefore, a knowledge of the nature of any finite or contingent entity does not imply a knowledge of its existence.¹

From the above distinctions, that between direct and indirect intelligibility, and that between "existential knowledge" [knowledge of a subject's existence], and "essential knowledge", [knowledge of a subject's nature], some important conclusions can be drawn pertaining to the general viability of any science.

First, one learns that since the knowability or intelligibility of a subject can be direct or indirect, what cannot be grasped in itself, may be intelligible by other means or in other ways. From this it follows that such a subject is not truly unknowable, and that a science of it is still possible. According to Aristotle, this is the case with all true subjects of
science. As seen previously, the object of science is what is universal; but this is never directly perceived by the human being. Scientific inquiry begins, as Aristotle observes, with the particular and changeable, with subjects that are, in themselves, least intelligible or knowable, owing to their complexity and contingency, but most readily or directly accessible to human beings. From this beginning, scientific inquiry proceeds to what is, in itself, most intelligible, owing to its necessity and simplicity, and for that reason, indirectly accessible to human beings."

Secondly, one learns that there are two really distinct ways or modes in which a subject can be intelligible to the mind: it may be intelligible in terms of its nature, or it may be intelligible in terms of its existence. Of course, it is perfectly conceivable that it should be intelligible to the mind in both ways simultaneously, but this does not show that the two modes of intelligibility are not really distinct. As seen, they can be present independently of each other, and this implies their real distinction. The question, of course, is which mode of intelligibility is the more fundamental, or the logically prior: the essential, or the existential?

From the standpoint of scientific inquiry, such a question is difficult to answer. As seen, scientific inquiry demands both the real [i.e., objective] existence of its subject matter, as well as
its universality, [the latter criterion being just another way of saying that the object of science is ultimately the quidditavive or the substantial]. For example, a science of dolphins requires that there really are such things as dolphins in the world, and that their existence is intelligible to human beings; and it also requires that there is something universal which is unique to dolphins, i.e. a dolphin "essence" or "nature", and that this essence is also intelligible to human beings.

Both the existential intelligibility and the essential intelligibility of its subject matter are, then, necessary for a science. Nevertheless, it seems that the existential intelligibility of the subject is the more fundamental. Why? First, because once again, there can be no subject of inquiry without a really existing subject; one cannot inquire into what does not really exist, and as seen, if it is an individual natural object as such, or something purely subjective, as a characteristic relative to the thoughts and feelings of an individual person or group, then it is not universal and absolute in scope, and so cannot be the subject of science. Second, because the starting point of any scientific inquiry is always the recognition of at least the possible existence of its subject matter. In other words, one is inclined to inquire into only that which one has apprehended, either directly or indirectly, to actually exist or possibly exist. The direction of an inquiry into
what is recognized to actually exist is to isolate the nature of
that actually existing subject, and to explain it and account for
it. On the other hand, the direction of an inquiry into what is
recognized to possibly exist is to first determine whether it
actually exists, and then attempt to isolate its nature and
explain it.

In summary, then, a science is legitimate or viable if it has
a distinct objective subject matter which is universal, [and thus
excludes individual natural objects per se, and the purely
subjective], and if that subject matter is, either directly or
indirectly, knowable to human beings, both in terms of its
existence and in terms of its nature. From this it follows that if
a science of normative ethics is possible or legitimate, [i.e. a
science accurately prescribing how human beings ought to act],
there must exist objective and universal moral principles. In
other words, there must really exist a set of general rules
describing how all human beings everywhere ought to act, [insofar
as it is a science of normative ethics, or a science prescribing
right conduct], rules independent of any subjective biases,
whether personal or cultural. And furthermore, these objective and
universal moral principles must be intelligible, either directly
or indirectly, from the human standpoint. This means that the
existence of a set of general rules governing how all human beings
everywhere ought to behave must be demonstrable, and the nature of

-23-
those rules must be intelligible; i.e., human beings must be able to isolate universal and absolute moral principles, and define the moral terms comprising them.

As stated previously, it is my hypothesis that Saint Thomas Aquinas, in developing an approach initiated by Aristotle, succeeds in fulfilling the two criteria set out above: Aquinas shows how and why universal and objective moral principles exist, and he explains what those principles involve. But before I can even begin to address and explicate directly the nature of my position, and explain how exactly Aquinas proves that a science of normative ethics is viable, I must address a very serious problem that has arisen in modern ethics which alleges the contrary, not simply with respect to Aquinas, but with respect to all attempts at moral science: the problem of the objectivity of ethics and the dilemma it raises in understanding the relation of fact to value.

It is precisely such a problem which Aquinas must be shown to circumvent in order to establish his success in constructing a valid moral philosophy. This is because it is precisely this problem, and the apparent failure of the customary methods designed to resolve it, which represent the most formidable obstacles standing in the way of demonstrating that there exists a legitimate subject matter for a science of normative ethics, and that this subject matter is accessible to human beings.

* * * * * * * *
Section Two: "The Problem of the Objectivity of Ethics"

During the past two hundred and fifty years, a certain problem which for the most part had been addressed only implicitly by ethicists, has come to dominate explicitly the pursuit of moral philosophy. It is a problem which revolves around the following question: Do normative propositions have an intelligible and objective truth-value? More specifically, is the truth-value of a normative proposition knowable, and can it be established independently of people's beliefs and feelings about morality? The problem, then, lies in showing exactly how normative propositions are objectively verifiable. Or, as it has come to be known, the problem lies in justifying the "objectivity of ethics".

The latter phrase is, however, potentially misleading. This is because what is traditionally coined "the problem of the objectivity of ethics" seems to have less to do with ethical objectivism, and more to do with ethical realism and absolutism. Establishing that normative propositions can be shown to be true or false independently of people's beliefs and feelings about morality would certainly bolster the cause of the ethical objectivist. But the issue of whether the objective truth-value of normative propositions is demonstrable falls more precisely within the domain of the ethical realist. Furthermore, insofar as it will be shown that the problem of the objectivity of ethics ultimately
involves the problem of finding a valid means by which to determine the truth of moral principles - general rules about how human beings everywhere ought to act - it is primarily the concern of the ethical absolutist. In fact, in the final analysis, what has come to be known as "the problem of the objectivity of ethics" appears to embody every facet of the more general issue of whether moral science is legitimate: i.e. whether the subject matter of ethics admits of objectivity, intelligibility, universality and necessity. To explain the exact nature of such a problem, it is perhaps best to enlist the aid of an example.

Consider, for instance, the normative proposition "Honesty is good". Assuming that this proposition is actually stating something, that it has cognitive meaning,- [and in this case, insofar as the proposition is specifically normative, that cognitive meaning involves at least the notion that honesty is something to be pursued by human beings], can it be shown to be objectively verifiable? For instance, is the truth of this proposition analytically demonstrable; i.e., is it self-evident, in the sense that its negation is contradictory, and its predicate is part of the concept of its subject? Or, is its truth empirically demonstrable; can the attribute of "goodness" be directly perceived in the honest act, or can it be indirectly perceived, [i.e., rationally deduced, inferred or induced], from other attributes in the act, for example, that honesty is
"desired". Or, finally, is the truth of such a proposition neither analytically nor empirically demonstrable, but actually the result of some form of "natural knowledge" or intuition. In other words, is "honesty good", [if, indeed, it is good], because its goodness is naturally known or intuited by human beings? The answers to the latter questions are forthcoming, but before one can even begin to provide them, a certain clarification needs to be made concerning the specific nature of the problem of the objectivity of ethics.

Fundamentally, the problem concerns the objective truth-value of the basic principles or propositions of ethical systems, the principles from which all other ethical principles or propositions are derived. Assuming the objective veracity of these basic principles, it is not difficult to show what propositions are derived from them. In this case, the process of demonstration is generally straightforward, [though not necessarily easy]: it is a matter of proving what means support certain ends.

The basic principles of ethical systems are propositions about what is basically or intrinsically good [or bad], right [or wrong]. That which is instrumental to what is basically or intrinsically good or right can be verified by being shown, empirically, to lead to them. The latter can be justified as "good" or "right" because they can be shown to be real means to these basic goods.

For example, in the following deductive argument, the first
two premises might be said to represent basic principles:

(1) Health is good. [primary basic principle]
(2) Actions maximizing health are right. [secondary basic principle/rule as derived from #1]
(3) Taking medicine contributes to maximizing health when ill. [empirical]
(4) Therefore, taking medicine is good or it is right to take medicine when ill.

Taking medicine can be shown empirically to be a means to health, [or at least, to be conjoined to it]; and so if health is good, it seems that since taking medicine is a means to health, taking medicine is also good, [although it is not good in itself, but only derivatively good].

But what about the basic principles? What justifies them? Taking medicine is good, [i.e. it is something to be done], because it is derived from the goodness of health. One can prove that this act is a means to health, and so objectively verify the goodness of the act. But what justifies the goodness of health? One can show why it is objectively true that taking medicine is good, if one assumes that health is good, but how does one objectively verify that health is good? It is an end, not a means; it is thought to be intrinsically or constitutently good, not instrumentally good. Why is health good?

Traditionally, many ethicists have been inclined to answer such a question in one of two ways:
(1) Health is good because people desire health for its own sake.
(2) Health is good because health is a constituent part of happiness

But both of these answers seem to be problematic. The first answer implies that something, [in this case, health], is good insofar as it is desired for its own sake. In response to this view, one may question whether it is true that health is good because it is desired for its own sake, or whether, alternatively, it would be more accurate to say that health is desired for its own sake because it is good? Furthermore, does the fact that something is desired for its own sake, even by everyone, necessarily make it "good"? When put in such a way, one is inclined to answer the question negatively, to use the method of counter-example and point out that it is possible to desire for its own sake what may be, in fact, "bad". Finally, the second answer to the question of why heath is good attempts to justify the goodness of health in a way analogous to how taking medicine was justified as good, by showing that health is itself a means to, [or in this case, a constituent part of], something basically or intrinsically good: i.e. happiness. But this leaves open the question of why happiness is good, [leaving aside, at least for the moment, the question of what happiness is]? What verifies the goodness of happiness?

This, then, is the specific nature of the problem of ethical objectivity: How does one objectively verify the basic principles...
of ethics, [whatever they are alleged to be]? How does one show that these principles are objectively true or false, and that their truth-value is knowable? To show that they are derived from other ethical principles is no solution; how does one verify those principles?

In the attempt to answer the latter question, two schools of thought have evolved among those modern moral philosophers who continue to champion the cause of objectivism, realism, and absolutism in ethics. The first school of thought is that of the "naturalists", who subscribe to what they construe to be the approach of "traditional ethics". The naturalist attempts to show that the propositions formulating the basic principles of a sound moral philosophy are derived from, or defined in terms of, or reducible to non-ethical propositions, [which can then be verified empirically or rationally].

But such an approach is doomed to failure according to the second school of thought, that of the non-naturalists. As will be seen shortly, according to them, the meaning of a normative proposition does not ever appear to be reducible to that of a descriptive proposition. But as will also be seen, the efforts by non-naturalists to prove the latter point, via arguments alleging that normative propositions are objectively verifiable because they are naturally known, intuited, or known a priori are faced with a serious obstacle of their own: the existence of moral
polemics.

As I stated in the Preface, most modern interpretations of Thomistic ethics also tend to be divided into two schools of thought: those who attempt to show that it is exclusively "naturalistic" in its approach, and those who attempt to show that it is exclusively "non-naturalistic". To understand why Aquinas' moral philosophy is interpreted in this way, and why it is my position that such interpretations are incorrect, it is important to understand what exactly the naturalistic and non-naturalistic approaches involve, and the problems encountered by each.

It is my contention that the Thomistic approach, rightly understood, can be shown to resolve the problem of the objectivity of ethics in a manner which avoids the difficulties encountered by both modern naturalists and modern non-naturalists. And I also contend that he does so in a manner which salvages the legitimacy of moral science.

Aquinas does not escape into subjectivism or non-cognitivism. In other words, he does not argue, like a third school of thought among modern ethicists, that the problem of the objectivity of ethics is a pseudo-problem because the truth-value of normative propositions is subjectively verifiable, [like some matters of aesthetic taste], or because such propositions are not really propositions at all, but "commands" or "expressions of approval", and so they have no cognitive meaning, and hence, no truth-value.
Rather, Aquinas certainly regards normative propositions as having cognitive meaning, as authentic propositions, and he regards them as objectively verifiable. However, contrary both to his modern advocates and his modern detractors, his approach for demonstrating the objectivity of ethics is neither purely naturalistic nor purely non-naturalistic. Aquinas steers a course between these two strategies for justifying the legitimacy of a science of ethics, avoiding the pitfalls of each. It is my task to bring to light the neglected fact that this course exists, and how it succeeds. In order to accomplish such a task, the specific difficulties associated with modern naturalism and modern non-naturalism must be explored first, beginning with the approach of the naturalist.

* * *

[i]. Naturalism.

In the natural sciences, the descriptive propositions which are advanced are thought to be objectively verified in one of two ways: either directly, through observation, or indirectly, through rational deduction, induction,1 or inference from observation. For example, to verify the proposition "Human beings are usually bipeds", one can simply observe whether this is the case among human beings. The attribute of bipedality is readily observable.

-32-
On the other hand, some natural attributes are not directly observable, and so the propositions in which they are predicated cannot be verified by direct observation. Rather, such propositions are verified indirectly. Attributes or qualities which cannot be directly observed are rationally determined. For example, the atomic make up of physical objects is not directly observable. To date, no human being has ever directly perceived an atom. But the proposition, "Physical objects are made of atoms" is thought to be objectively verifiable, in so far as it reflects a fact which, while not directly observable, can be rationally determined from other observable facts about the nature of physical objects: e.g., their behaviour under certain conditions. These methods of verifying descriptive propositions by direct observation or by reasoning from direct observation have, in fact, come to serve as the foundations of the scientific method itself.

In the effort to justify ethics as a legitimate science, or perhaps on the assumption that it already is, philosophers have often approached the task of objectively verifying normative propositions in a manner analogous to that of the verification of descriptive propositions in the natural sciences. In other words, many philosophers have utilized what is known as the "naturalistic" approach to establish the objectivity of ethics. They have attempted to verify the normative propositions of their ethical systems as though they are the descriptive propositions of
a natural science. For naturalists, normative terms such as "good" and "right" are thought to be reducible to descriptive terms; the attributes of goodness and rightness are thought to be reducible to natural attributes. The result, according to naturalists, is that normative propositions are themselves reducible to descriptive propositions, and can be verified accordingly.

As stated previously, however, the attempt to establish the objectivity of ethics by reducing normative propositions to descriptive ones appears very problematic. Exactly why this is a problem begins with the question of what normative propositions appear to signify, at least insofar as they are specifically normative. As normative, it seems that such propositions have more than a descriptive meaning, but also, and perhaps most fundamentally, a prescriptive meaning. For example, to say that "Telling the truth is right" is at least to prescribe the act of telling the truth, to say that "telling the truth ought to be pursued", or is "what ought". To say that "Happiness is good" is at least to prescribe it as an object of desire, to say that "happiness is desirable" or is "what ought". This is to be contrasted with the purely descriptive meaning of non-ethical or theoretical propositions. Such propositions make no prescriptions; they do not state what ought to be the case, but only what is the case. Normative propositions, then, have prescriptive meaning; they prescribe values. On the other hand, non-normative or
Theoretical propositions have descriptive meaning: they describe facts.

The naturalist attempts to establish the objectivity of ethics by reducing the former to the latter. In other words, the naturalist tries to verify normative propositions by arguing that in the final analysis, they are really descriptive propositions, and so can be verified in the same manner as these: i.e. directly via observation, or indirectly, via deduction, induction, or inference from observation.

One of the most famous examples of this attempt is found in Chapter 4 of J. S. Mill's *Utilitarianism*, where the author sets out to justify the principle of utility. It is here that Mill argues that because pleasure or happiness is the only thing which people desire for its own sake, [a descriptive statement of psychological hedonism], it follows that pleasure or happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake, [a prescriptive statement of ethical hedonism]. Most other naturalists follow the same approach; they attempt to verify normative propositions by showing that they are somehow derived from, reducible to, or defined in terms of, non-normative propositions. Naturalists will often cite psychological, sociological, anthropological, or metaphysical facts in their efforts to objectively ground their normative claims.

However, opponents of the naturalistic approach, such as G.E.
Moore," argue that such efforts are misguided, that the veracity of a normative claim cannot be derived from or grounded upon the veracity of a descriptive claim, because such claims have radically different meanings. An unbridgeable gap is said to lie between the two: How does one verify an "ought" by a "non-ought", a "value" by a "fact"? Indeed, how can the truth of ethical propositions be derived from, or reduced to, or defined in terms of, the truth of non-ethical propositions, if non-ethical propositions do not mean the same thing as ethical propositions? Non-naturalists allege that to attempt such deduction, reduction, or definition, is to commit the "Naturalistic Fallacy".

What exactly is this alleged fallacy? It involves, very basically, the attempt to do what is said to be impossible: to determine the truth-value of normative propositions by denying their normative meaning, and subscribing, instead, to the view that they actually have descriptive meaning. In other words, the naturalistic fallacy is, like many fallacies, allegedly based upon the attempt to make a contradiction true, to say that "A is not-A", or that normative propositions do not really have any normative meaning, that they are not normative propositions at all.

The fallacy itself has three senses. On the basis of the view that ethical propositions do not mean, or cannot ever mean the same things as non-ethical propositions, [e.g. that "health is
desired" does not mean "health is good"], it is argued that it is a fallacy to:

(1). Try to derive the objective truth-value of ethical propositions from the objective truth-value of what is non-ethical.

(2). Try to reduce the objective truth-value of ethical propositions to the objective truth-value of what is non-ethical.

(3). Try to define ethical terms, and propositions as though they are non-ethical terms and propositions.

For the sake of clarity, the reasoning behind each sense will be explained separately.

(A). Why it is a fallacy to attempt to derive the objective truth-value of ethical propositions from the objective truth-value of non-ethical propositions.

In A Treatise of Human Nature, David Hume writes:

In every system of morality which I have hitherto met with I have always remarked that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary way of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when of a sudden I am surprised to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, is and is not, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an ought, or an ought not. This change is imperceptible; but is, however, of the last consequence. For as this ought or ought not expresses some new relation or affirmation, it is necessary that it should be observed and explained; and at the same time that a reason should be given for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others that are entirely different from it.'
In other words, it is a fallacy to conclude an argument with an ethical proposition, where none of the premises are ethical propositions; and this is most easily seen in the case of those arguments which specifically attempt to deduce values from facts.

According to Hume, ethics, in many of its traditional forms, has attempted to justify its prescriptions in precisely the latter way: to deduce values from facts. Mill's argument for the justification of the principle of utility, as cited earlier, is a perfect example of this attempt. From the description of a certain fact, in this case about human nature, and what people desire for its own sake, Mill attempts to deduce a value concerning what is "desirable", or what ought to be desired. The transition, as Hume rightly points out, is a subtle one, almost imperceptible. And prima facie, the deduction appears legitimate, valid, as it superficially resembles certain deductive arguments from the natural sciences. Consider, for example, the following argument:

(1). Colours are seen by human beings.
(2). Therefore, colours are visible.

Such an argument is clearly valid. If colours are seen, it follows that they can be seen; the actuality attests to the potentiality.

On the surface, Mill's proof for the desirability of pleasure appears to follow the same structure and the same line of reasoning as such an argument. To recapitulate, Mill argues:
(1). Pleasure is desired for its own sake by human beings.
(2). Therefore, pleasure is desirable.

If by "desirable", Mill means "can be desired", then his argument is valid; "can be desired" follows from "is desired", just as "can be seen", follows from "are seen". But from the context of Chapter 4 of Utilitarianism, it is clear that Mill does not simply mean "can be desired" when he describes pleasure as desirable. Indeed, he means far more than this. According to Mill, the statement that "Pleasure is desirable" affirms a basic principle of his ethical system; it describes a basic human good.\(^{16}\) In other words, for Mill, the statement that "Pleasure is desirable" has normative meaning, prescriptive meaning; it is a statement of value, or more precisely, of what ought to be valued.

There is, then, a rather dramatic difference between Mill's deductive argument for the desirability of pleasure, and the deductive argument for the visibility of colours, despite their superficial resemblance. The first alleges that "what ought to be" is implicit in "what is", while the second merely alleges that "what can be" is implicit in "what is". Opponents of naturalism argue that the first form of allegation is illicit, that the deduction found in Mill's argument is invalid, since the conclusion does not actually follow from the premises, but only appears to do so, as a result of the ambiguous meaning of the
predicate expressed in the conclusion.

The meaning of the term "desirable" can be rendered either as "can be desired" or "ought to be desired". This double entendre is what causes the argument to appear valid, as it no doubt caused Mill, a logician, to think so. One of the meanings of "desirable", [i.e. "can be desired"], is implied by the premise describing what is desired, and this obscures the fact that the alternate meaning of the term, [i.e. "ought to be desired"], is not implied by it.

Anti-naturalists argue that a conclusion is validly deduced when it "contains nothing that the premises do not contain". If the conclusion "contains" something other than what is found in the premises, it does not validly follow from them. And anti-naturalists allege that if the premises in a deductive argument are all statements of "fact", having descriptive meaning, or stating "what is", the conclusion cannot be a statement of "value", having prescriptive meaning, or stating "what ought to be".

Of course, the latter line of argument can itself be accused of ambiguity. What, exactly, does it mean to say that "the conclusion of a deductive argument cannot contain anything not contained in the premises"? To what does this notion of "containment" refer? And does it not suggest that deductive arguments can be nothing more than tautological in structure, i.e., that they can do nothing more than beg the question in order
to be deemed valid? Indeed, if this were the case, would it not render the theoretical argument about the visibility of colours invalid as well? After all, in that argument, the premise is about what is "actual", but the conclusion is about what is "potential". Does such a conclusion, then, not also "contain" something that is not "contained" in the premise?

The point of such a critique is well taken; the argument supporting the first sense of the naturalistic fallacy is indeed ambiguous, but this does not mean that it is unsound. It only means that in its traditional form, it is sadly imprecise. A more precise and meticulous articulation of the main point of such an argument will demonstrate its soundness.

According to formal logic, a deductive argument is valid if it is impossible for its premise(s) to be true, and its conclusion false. On the contrary, a deductive argument is invalid, if it is possible for its conclusion to be false, while its premises are true. Furthermore, formal logic states that in the case of deductive arguments which neither explicitly nor implicitly conform to elementary or standard categorical form, the most efficient means of determining their validity is through the method of counter-example. Since all deductive arguments allege that something is necessarily the case, [i.e., that the conclusion necessarily follows from the premises], the method of testing validity by counter-example involves the attempt to conceive,
without contradiction, of a situation in which it is possible for the conclusion to be false, while the premises are true. From this it follows that the method of counter-example can be employed to test the validity of any deductive argument, including the kind constructed by naturalists in their attempts to objectively verify normative claims. And needless to say, the latter arguments appear to fail such a test, as the following will clearly convey.

Consider, once again, the argument provided by J. S. Mill, which for the purposes of the present discussion has represented the model or archetype of the naturalist attempt to deduce the objectivity of values from the objectivity of facts. Is it impossible for Mill's conclusion, that pleasure is desirable, [ought to be desired], is false, while his premise, that pleasure is desired is true? Can one conceive of a situation, without contradiction, in which pleasure, [or anything, for that matter], is desired, but not necessarily desirable? The answer appears to be yes.

People often desire what moralists claim they ought not to desire. The heroin addict desires another injection; the alcoholic desires another drink; the thief desires to steal his neighbour's property, and the adulterer desires to covet his neighbour's spouse. These are all examples in which the desirability of an act is not thought to be implied by the fact that it is desired.\footnote{In defense of the utilitarian, one may claim that his example}
of the desire for pleasure is unique, as it conjoins two qualities that the others do not: (1) It is universally desired, and (2) It is universally desired for its own sake. Given these two qualities, does it not necessarily follow that pleasure is desirable? The answer, unfortunately, is no. One can easily conceive, without contradiction, of a situation in which something is universally desired for its own sake, and yet is not necessarily desirable. For example, one can conceive of the entire human race being addicted to a certain drug whose intake shortens the average human lifespan by fifty percent and makes human beings far more susceptible to disease. Given their addiction to the drug, it would follow that it is universally desired for its own sake by all people, and yet it hardly seems to follow from this that it ought to be desired by them.

To make the case for the first sense of the naturalistic fallacy even stronger, it is helpful to return to the theoretical argument for the visibility of colours, and consider whether such an argument would be valid if by "visibility" one meant not "can be seen", but "ought to be seen". Does it follow from the fact that colours are seen, that they "ought to be seen"? The answer would certainly appear to be negative. Consider, as an analogous example, Plato's description in Book IV of the Republic of Leontius who, on passing the scene of some recent public executions outside the walls of Athens, acts contrary to his
better judgement, and succumbs to the desire to look upon the bodies of the dead criminals. The corpses are seen by Leontius, but he certainly appears convinced that they ought not to be seen. Of course, what does follow in the case of either the corpses and the colours which are seen, is that they can be seen, and this is the customary meaning of "visible". If something is seen, it necessarily follows that it is visible; one cannot conceive, without contradiction, of a situation in which a thing is seen and is also invisible. To see the invisible is contradictory.

But to desire the undesirable is not contradictory. In fact, normative ethics is built upon the principle that people do so quite often, which is why they are in need of moral guidance, and why a science of ethics is required.

And yet the manner by which to establish the legitimacy of such a science appears quite elusive. The naturalist attempt to deduce the objectivity of values from descriptive claims appears to fail, as Mill's argument about the desirability pleasure attests. Such an argument has a premise stating a fact, a "what is", but the conclusion states a value, a "what ought". The transition appears illicit; "where", as Hume inspires one to ask, "does the ought come from?": Not from the premise - it includes no "ought", or more precisely, it is not contradictory for it to be true, and the conclusion false. It seems invalid, then, to deduce
"oughts" from "is-es", or values from facts.

Anyone who does so is accused of the first sense of the naturalistic fallacy, the view that ethical arguments are analogous to arguments in the natural sciences, where conclusions are derived from facts. For many naturalists, the reasoning in an ethical argument is thought to be like that of an argument in physics, astronomy, biology, or psychology. But this is clearly not the case, for in the natural sciences, facts are derived from facts, not values from facts.

Of course, as stated previously, ethical deductions in particular would be valid if values are included in the premises, for then values can be got out of them. Consider, for example, the following argument:

(1) People's needs ought to be satisfied.
(2) It is easier for people to satisfy their needs when they co-operate.
(3) Therefore, people ought to co-operate.
(4) Honesty is conducive to co-operation.
(5) Therefore, people ought to be honest.

This argument is valid. The problem lies in showing how it is sound. How does one know that premise one is true; where does one get this "ought" from? Perhaps it is perceived directly via sensation or introspection, or it is analytically true, [i.e., its negation is contradictory], but it would appear that it cannot be derived from facts.
Many naturalists, in response to the first sense of the naturalistic fallacy, attempt to employ the latter alternatives. As John Hospers states, perhaps there is no need to deduce the truth of basic ethical principles or propositions; perhaps one can verify them by direct observation, [i.e. a posteriori], or perhaps they amount to definitions, and so can be verified a priori, as all analytic propositions are verified.  

The first hypothesis, that they can be verified a posteriori, involves the view that ethical propositions and terms are somehow reducible to non-ethical propositions and terms. That this is not possible pertains to the second sense of the naturalistic fallacy.

(B). Why it is a fallacy to reduce ethical propositions and terms to non-ethical propositions and terms.

Can ethical propositions be verified a posteriori by reducing them to non-ethical propositions? The empirical, or a posteriori verification of a proposition assumes the ability to directly observe that to which the proposition refers. For example, to verify the proposition, "the chalk is white", one must be able to directly observe both the chalk in question, and its alleged "whiteness". Thankfully, these are usually observable.

But what of the proposition, "Honesty is good", can it be verified by direct observation? The act of telling the truth is observable. But what about the attribute of "goodness"? A
normative proposition, as already seen, has prescriptive meaning; "honesty is good" seems at least to be equivalent to "honesty [is something which] ought to be pursued". Yet, "ought to be pursued" does not seem to be an attribute that, as such, can be directly observed via sensation or introspection. One does not see it, feel it, taste it, touch it, smell it, or reflect upon it. And yet some form of perception of this attribute must take place if it is indeed an attribute that can be known.

Of course, it may be interjected that direct observation of the goodness of honesty is possible, in so far as such an act may be regarded as an instrumental means to some other good object or action, as stated previously. But this interjection is irrelevant to the present point, which assumes that the proposition "honesty is good" must reflect a basic moral principle in order for the dilemma regarding its objective truth-value to arise at all.

If, then, the goodness of honesty is not directly observable, how can it be verified a posteriori? The naturalist response to this question is based upon the hypothesis that if the property of goodness is reducible to a property that can be empirically observed, a non-ethical property, then the a posteriori verification of the proposition can proceed.

But the opponent of naturalism argues that ethical terms do not seem to be so reducible. Indeed, does "good" or "ought to be pursued" mean the same thing as "conducive to human cooperation"
or "desired by human beings", or "pleasant"? One may observe that honesty, in some particular context, has all of these attributes, but one can still deny that it ought to be pursued, that it is "good", and so goodness does not seem to be reducible to such attributes. Hospers uses the example of the ethical proposition "War is evil" to make the same point.

There are a number of observable properties that are associated with war: e.g. people die or are injured, and there is widespread destruction and suffering. Anyone can observe these, and to deny them would be to deny the facts. But is the attribute of evil reducible to any or all of these observable properties. It is perfectly conceivable for someone to admit that all such observable properties are associated with war, and yet deny that it is evil. Two people may agree that there is widespread death, destruction and suffering in war, and yet disagree as to whether war is evil. It seems that evil is not reducible to such observable attributes: that "widespread death, destruction, and suffering" are not necessarily synonymous with evil. It is, then, a fallacy to try to reduce the meaning of evil, to the meaning of such attributes. As Hospers puts it, this reductivist sense of the naturalistic fallacy involves the fallacy of trying to reduce two really distinct properties to one. It is like trying to reduce "blueness" to "redness", when blueness and redness are really distinct, when they are really two properties, not one.
Reducing "goodness" to "pleasantness" or "usefulness", for example, appears to involve the same fallacy. The good and the pleasant appear to be really distinct, as do the good and the useful. They are not different names for the same property. Why? Because, as G.E. Moore argues in his famous "open question critique", it always seems reasonable to ask whether something pleasant or useful is good, [i.e., whether it ought to be pursued], or why it is good. It is always possible for someone to say that they agree that a certain action is useful or pleasant, and deny that it is good. This is clear from the fact that one can think of useful or pleasant objects or actions which are not necessarily "good". For example, the most pleasant or most expedient means for getting "from A to B", [i.e. of arriving at one's destination], is not necessarily the right means, the means that one ought to pursue.

This latter point brings one to the heart of the naturalistic fallacy, which appears to be found in its "definist" sense: that it is a fallacy to try to define the ethical terms that distinguish ethical propositions in non-ethical language, in order to try to objectively verify ethical propositions.

(C). Why it is a fallacy to define the ethical in terms of the non-ethical.

The attempt to deduce ethical propositions from non-ethical
propositions presupposes that, somehow, certain non-ethical terms have the same meaning as ethical terms. And the attempt to reduce ethical terms to non-ethical terms, for the sake of trying to verify ethical propositions a posteriori, also presupposes that, somehow, certain non-ethical terms have the same meaning as ethical terms. So both the deductivist and the reductivist senses of the naturalistic fallacy are species of the definist sense of the fallacy, which involves the view that the ethical is indefinable in non-ethical terminology. It is a fallacy to try to define the indefinable. But why, exactly can ethical terms not be defined in non-ethical language.

I have already touched upon the apparent answer to this question when I discussed how, when predicated in normative propositions, terms such as good and right imply a sense of value - "oughtness" - that non-ethical terms do not imply when predicated in descriptive propositions. I also touched upon such an answer when I discussed how the attempt to reduce ethical terms to non-ethical terms fails because it always seems possible to accept that a certain non-ethical property is present in an action or object, and yet deny or at least question in what sense the action or object has ethical import.

But neither of these points seem to fully explain why ethical terms are ultimately indefinable in non-ethical terminology, for there appears to be a way of avoiding them. They are symptoms of
the naturalistic fallacy, manifestations of it, which indeed can be avoided. But the fallacy remains. One can control the symptoms of a disease, and so appear to cure it, without actually curing it at all, because one has not eradicated the cause of the disease. The following hypothetical scenario will explain and elucidate the latter point.

Imagine "goodness" being defined as "usefulness"; good is said to mean useful, whereby the proposition "The useful is good" can be verified a priori like other analytic propositions. For example, just as in the proposition, "A bachelor is an unmarried man", where the predicate "unmarried man" is part of the concept of the subject "bachelor", in the proposition "The useful is good", the predicate "good" is said to be part of the concept of the subject "useful".

Immediately one may object that good does not mean useful, since one can think of something useful, and deny that it is good, or think of something useful which does not imply "what ought". But one cannot do this with bachelor and unmarried man. But these objections, at least hypothetically, seem to be avoidable.

What if one were able to show that every instance in which people predicate goodness of an action or object perfectly coincides with their finding that object or action useful. There would then be no instance of goodness that is not also an instance of usefulness. If that were the case, one could not think of
something useful, and deny that it is good, and also not think of something useful that is not "what ought".

If one were able to show this, would one not avoid the naturalistic fallacy altogether? The answer, unfortunately, is no, and the reason is quite ancient, stemming back to a line of argument attributed to Socrates. In the dialogue of the *Euthyphro*, for example, the character of Socrates, in search of the definition of "piety", and in response to Euthyphro's claim that piety is defined as any action such as the one he is performing, responds by warning Euthyphro not to confuse meaning with reference or denotation: "In other words, Socrates argues that piety does not mean the same thing as that to which it refers, or the same thing as it denotes. It may refer to any action such as that which Euthyphro is performing, but this is not what it means. Any such action may be an instance of piety, but isolating the definition of a term does not involve pointing out one, or even all of its instances, but pointing out why, specifically, one or all of those instances are instances.

It certainly would not be acceptable to define the term bachelor by pointing to one, or even all of the bachelors in the world. What is it about them that denotes bachelorhood? Why are they bachelors, and not any other people? Is it a coincidence that they are all men? Indeed, what if, by some very odd coincidence, it happened that all the instances of bachelorhood present in the
world also had, for a very long time, "brown eyes". All blue-eyed, green-eyed, grey-eyed, and hazel-eyed men were married, dead, yet to be born, part of some religious order, divorced or widowed. In such a case, would being brown-eyed qualify as part of the definition of bachelor?

Let us return briefly to the Socratic example. What if there was only one person in the world performing pious actions and this person also performed only pious actions: Would it then be appropriate to define piety as the actions of this person? To make the point even clearer, consider the example offered by Hospers: every instance of an equilateral triangle is also and always an instance of an equiangular triangle. Does this mean that equilateral triangularity means equiangular triangularity? Clearly not, for "equilateral refers to an attribute of the sides of the triangle", while "equiangular refers to an attribute of the angles of the triangle". Equilateral triangularity and equiangular triangularity are still two separate properties, with distinct meanings, even though they always occur together. Generally, of course, they always refer to the same instances, or the same set of triangles. But specifically, they differ in that they specify different properties within that same set.

It appears that the definition of a term must do more than isolate the general set to which it refers, which includes all properties belonging to that set, it must specify the exact
property within that set to which it refers: in other words, it must isolate the specific differences(s) between itself and all the other properties within the set.

"Bachelor" refers to the specific properties of being unmarried, [as opposed to married and non-married], and being an adult human male, not to the property of having brown eyes, [even if this always coincides with the former]. "Piety" refers to the specific property of reverence for God in an action, not to the actions of a certain person, [even if these always coincide with the former]. "Equilateral" refers to the specific property of the sides of a triangle all being the same length, not to the property of all the angles being identical, [even though this always coincides with the former]. The point, then, is that just because two properties perpetually coincide, does not mean that they are identical.

The same actions which are thought good may also and always be thought useful, but this does not mean that goodness and usefulness are identical, that it is contradictory to say that goodness is not usefulness; only that it is contradictory to say that a good action is not a useful action. Clearly, it is not contradictory for one to say that the concept of equilateral triangularity is not the concept of equiangular triangularity, but it is contradictory to say that an equilateral triangle is not an equiangular triangle. In other words, when two properties always
coincide, their instances are identical, whereby it would be contradictory to say that an instance with one of the properties, is not an instance with the other property, but this does not mean that the first property is the second property, that it is contradictory to say that the properties are not the same.

So even if goodness and usefulness always coincide, one cannot prove that goodness means usefulness. Strictly speaking, one is still able to deny, without contradiction, that they are the same; it is still possible that they are not: They may not be two names for the same thing.

It may be objected that this is irrelevant; that if one knows that such properties coincide, one is able to verify ethical propositions not directly, but indirectly, by empirically observing usefulness, since this always coincides with goodness. After all, if one does not know what equilateral triangularity means, but does know that it always coincides with equiangular triangularity, whose meaning one does know, one can identify what is equilateral indirectly by identifying what is equiangular. A nice trick, but unfortunately, it will not work either. For if one does not know what a certain property involves, how does one know if it really always coincides with another? Because one is told that it does? But how does one verify that one is being told the truth?

Indeed, if the fact that every action people call good is the
same as every action they call useful, does not give one grounds for defining goodness as usefulness, and if one cannot ever use any other coincidence between the predication of goodness and the predication of some non-ethical term as grounds for defining goodness in non-ethical terminology, then one does not know what "goodness" means, and so one cannot assume that people are right when they predicate goodness in any context, including those contexts where they also predicate usefulness.

And so one is still, ultimately, unable to verify ethical propositions if one's approach is to verify them analytically or empirically. The naturalistic fallacy seems to pervade every dimension of the naturalistic approach.

But there is also, as said, a different approach, and it is one which attempts to avoid such a fallacy by abandoning the basic preconception of naturalism: that ethical terms can be defined non-ethically. This is the approach of "cognitivist non-naturalism", whose attempt and apparent failure to demonstrate the objectivity of ethics must also be investigated before the suitable approach in Thomistic ethics can be discerned, and fully appreciated.

*   *   *   *

-56-
In response to the rather serious obstacles confronting the naturalistic approach to justifying the objectivity of ethics, non-naturalists attempt a very different approach: they argue that the meaning of normative terms and the objective verification of normative propositions have, in the final analysis, nothing at all to do with the meaning of non-ethical or natural terms, and the objective verification of natural or theoretical propositions. To understand the dynamics of this non-naturalist approach, at least in the modern context, some background to it must be given in the form of a brief explication of the philosophical argument which, it seems to me, might actually serve as its main inspiration: the Kantian argument for the existence of transcendental properties, and synthetic a priori propositions.

According to Immanuel Kant, not all propositions can be verified as synthetic a posteriori or analytic a priori: i.e. not all propositions can be verified by direct observation, by deduction, induction, or inference from direct observation, or by analysis or deduction from analysis. Rather, Kant argues that there exist propositions whose objective verification is accomplished by means of what he calls a "transcendental
deduction", or what may be paraphrased as a "necessary intuition", [though Kant himself would have probably rejected the latter term, as he confined the word "intuition" to a much narrower context]. Kant referred to such propositions as "synthetic a priori", by which he meant to convey their unique nature.

The propositions are a priori, argued Kant, in the sense that they are not verified empirically and are understood as strictly necessary and universal. On the other hand, the propositions are "synthetic" because they do not "merely elucidate the content of our concepts", but add to them, [and hence, cannot be verified analytically], and because their negations are not contradictory. In other words, for Kant, synthetic a priori propositions are regarded as necessarily and universally true, yet non-logical, and so their verification lies neither in observation nor analysis.

As stated above, Kant holds that such propositions are verified by "transcendental" proofs and his reason for holding this is quite simple; he believes that they predicate non-empirical properties, or properties which are not perceived by the senses. Kant mentions several examples of such properties, but among the most intriguing is the property of causality, or the causal relation.

Inspired no doubt by David Hume, Kant first investigates whether this property is perceived sensibly or introspectively, and he discovers that it appears that neither is the case.

-58-
According to Kant, people never seem to experience necessary causal connections; rather they experience only successions of events, successions which often conform to patterns. Even in their own deliberate behaviour, people do not seem to actually experience themselves as causes, but merely as succeeded by the events they deliberately intend. As a result, Kant concludes that the causal principle, which states that "every event has a cause" cannot be verified a posteriori.

But nor, it seems, can they be verified analytically. Kant argues that the negation of the causal proposition or principle is not contradictory. According to Kant, it is conceivable, without contradiction, that events do not have causes. A person can conceive of events "just happening", with no explanation, and such a conception does not seem to involve a contradiction. Indeed, it does not seem to be part of the concept of an event that it be caused.

And yet, Kant observes that the causal principle is regarded as strictly necessary by the human mind. However, as seen, he also observes that people can conceive of events without causes, and that they do not appear to have empirical knowledge of objective causes. He thus concludes that causality seems to be a necessary condition of our experience of events, that causality is a non-empirical property.

By "non-empirical property", is meant a property which
cannot be perceived by the senses, whereby propositions predicing it can be verified as synthetic a posteriori. Causality seems to qualify as such a property. To recapitulate, it seems to be a property that is known neither empirically nor analytically, and it is a property whose predication of certain empirical phenomena [events] is regarded by the human mind as strictly necessary. As a result, Kant argues that the causal principle, which states that "every event has a cause", is a synthetic a priori proposition, by which he means that it is a proposition whose predicate adds to the concept of the subject, and yet is thought to be necessarily conjoined to the subject.

* * * *

Given the latter overview of the Kantian argument for the existence of the transcendental and the synthetic a priori, it is easy to see how it may inspire modern non-naturalists in their attempts to demonstrate the objectivity of ethics in a manner which avoids the naturalistic fallacy. These non-naturalists appear to be impressed with how the features of normative properties and normative propositions seem to be parallel to the features of what Kant describes as "non-empirical properties" and synthetic a priori propositions.

For example, like Kant's non-empirical property of causality, or the causal relation, it seems that normative properties such as
goodness or rightness cannot be perceived empirically, and nor can they be perceived through the analysis of, [or deduction from], empirical phenomena. And like Kant's example of the causal principle as a synthetic a priori proposition, normative propositions, primarily those concerned with basic ethical principles, [e.g. "health is good"], also do not appear to be verifiable by direct observation or analysis. The negations of such propositions do not seem contradictory, [as Moore's open question argument attests]. Nor can the relation of their predicates to their subjects be empirically confirmed. And yet, just as in the case of the causal principle, human beings appear to regard certain of these propositions as necessarily true.

Given such remarkable parallels, it seems to me that many non-naturalists are inspired to conclude that ethical properties are, in fact, non-empirical properties, [in the Kantian sense], and that the normative propositions which serve as the basic principles of ethical theories, are nothing less than synthetic a priori propositions. And of course, these non-naturalists also conclude that like all synthetic a priori propositions, such normative claims find their objective verification in the human mind's natural or necessary grasp of them.

In general, non-naturalists argue that ethical terms such as "good" and "right" are indeed ultimately indefinable in natural or descriptive terminology. The former refer not to natural
properties, but to "non-natural properties"; and propositions in which they are predicated refer not to natural facts, but to "non-natural facts". According to non-naturalism, predicking goodness of an object, or rightness of an action, is a way of expressing one's intuitive, a priori, or natural [i.e. necessary] grasp of its real value or real ethical import. The normative proposition alleges a "non-natural fact"; it predicates a transcendental property of an object or action, and human beings have intuitive, a priori, or natural access to a set of "non-natural facts" from which they can determine the veracity of the normative proposition. According to non-naturalists, people "see" that the proposition is or is not consistent with the non-natural facts which they naturally know or intuit; and hence, people intuitively or naturally deduce, the truth-value of the proposition.

Consequently, some non-naturalists are led to regard any normative proposition whose truth is so deduced as at least analogous to a synthetic a priori proposition, and thus, as objectively verified in the manner of all synthetic a priori propositions.

People do not, argues the non-naturalist, experience the goodness or badness of an object, or the rightness or wrongness of an action; they intuit these properties, or recognize them naturally. Such properties are termed "non-natural". Just as Kant argues that we cannot understand physical objects apart from
temporality or spatiality, or events apart from causality, [even though none of these properties seems essential to such objects], the non-naturalist argues that we cannot understand health apart from "goodness", and disease apart from "badness", honesty apart from "rightness", and murder apart from "wrongness", [even though none of these properties seems essential to such objects or actions]. And it is on account of this necessary intuition that the objective truth-value of normative propositions is established. After all, it is not the frivolity of human preference, or the arbitrariness of human whim - indeed, it is not subjective bias of any kind - that establishes the veracity of what is intuited, naturally known, or known a priori, and hence, of the normative claim. Rather, the objective demands of human understanding establish this veracity.

Thus described, the non-naturalist argument for the objectivity of ethics appears, at first glance, to be quite compelling. The argument, as a whole, is both impressive and thought-provoking. But it also appears that in the final analysis it is no less problematic than the naturalist argument. Stemming from its claim that the veracity of normative propositions is naturally known, necessarily intuited, or known a priori by the human mind, the main problem with the argument lies in its ultimate failure to explain fundamental moral disagreements, and the disparity between different systems of morality.
As the cultural and moral relativist is quick to point out, different cultures and even different individuals appear to have different moral codes. What is acceptable and desirable to one culture or individual, is often unacceptable and undesirable to another. In his discussion of cultural relativism, James Rachels cites several examples of this phenomenon. He recounts the story told by Herodotus of how an ancient king of Persia was intrigued by the difference between Greek and Callatian funeral rites: The Greeks practiced cremation, while the Callatians would eat the bodies of their dead. And of course, each culture regarded the practice of the other as abominable. Rachels also describes how Inuit communities used to practice infanticide, and involuntary euthanasia, and all to the horror of the first Europeans who encountered them.

But one need not look to the past for evidence of moral disparity. In every community on earth, the moral code embraced by the community's criminals is usually abhorred by that of its law abiding members. And among the views of moral philosophers, there continues to be widespread controversy. Deontologists and teleologists vehemently disagree as to the role played by consequences in determining the moral quality of actions, and so they often differ in what their moral systems find intrinsically valuable. And both deontologists and teleologists also disagree among themselves. Some teleologists argue that the life of
pleasure is the best life, while others argue that the pursuit of such a life is beneath human dignity. Some deontologists claim that one's public duties must take precedence over all private moral obligations, while others argue the very opposite, that the private takes precedence over the public.

Given such moral disagreements, how much credibility is left for the non-naturalist's claim that human beings necessarily intuit, naturally know, or recognise a priori, the objective veracity and significance of normative claims? Indeed, if the truth of a normative proposition is necessarily intuited, or if it is known a priori or naturally, how is it that human beings appear to differ so greatly regarding which normative propositions they believe to be true or false? Should not the opposite be the case? Should there not be little or no evidence of moral controversy, if moral truth is naturally known, intuited, or known a priori?

In response to such questions, the advocate of non-naturalism is likely to orchestrate a two-pronged defense. On the one hand, non-naturalism can be defended by invoking the classical arguments against cultural and moral relativism. On the other hand, it can be defended through an appeal to its own explanation of moral disagreements. The former line of defense will be examined first.

The traditional arguments against cultural and moral relativism attempt to show that there is less disagreement between the moral codes of different peoples than there appears to be, and
that some moral values are indeed universal. As Rachels points out, what are often interpreted as differences in the moral codes of different cultures may, in fact, only illustrate how different cultures practice the same values differently. Rachels argues that because of differences in their religious beliefs and physical environments, different cultures often apply the same values in diverse ways.

For example, in the case of the Greeks and Callatians, there is no doubt that both cultures valued actions which they thought demonstrated honour and respect for the dead; but as a result of different religious beliefs, they each expressed this value in different ways. One can interpret the Inuit practices of infanticide and involuntary euthanasia in a similar fashion. Such practices do not necessarily indicate that the Inuit valued their children, disabled, and elderly any less than the first Europeans who encountered their culture. It is more likely that the practices reflect how, on account of the harsh nature of their environment which made survival extremely difficult, the Inuit were compelled to adopt extreme measures. Their society simply would not have survived if they had attempted to sustain too many members who could not directly contribute to its welfare.

The issue of survival also plays an important role in Rachels' argument that some moral values must be universal. Rachels claims that there is not now, nor has there ever been, and
nor could there ever be a human community in which some prohibition against murder and some advocation of honesty are not adopted by its members. His reasoning is straightforward: a society could hardly be formed, let alone survive, if its members avoid complete contact with each other because they fear for their lives, and perpetually regard one another as untrustworthy. Thus, Rachels concludes that some moral values are universal and absolute, because human societies, [and perhaps individual human beings themselves], could not exist without them.

On the surface, such a conclusion seems to assist considerably the cause of non-naturalism. Indeed, both of the arguments against cultural and moral relativism appear to rescue the credibility of the non-naturalist's position. After all, if there are really far fewer moral disagreements than there appear to be, and if some moral values are held universally, then the argument for the objectivity of ethics which claims that the truth-value of a normative proposition is necessarily intuited, naturally known, or known a priori, appears to be far less problematic.

Unfortunately, such an appearance does not conform to reality. For one thing, the arguments against cultural relativism do not show unequivocally that moral disagreements do not exist at all, and more importantly, they do not show that serious moral disagreements about basic moral claims do not or cannot exist. In
fact, a great many serious moral controversies remain unscathed by such arguments, including all of the disagreements between moral philosophers which were mentioned earlier. Secondly, the arguments against moral relativism suggest that the method used to verify normative propositions is, to a very large extent, not the same as that advanced by non-naturalists: the appeal to intuition, or to natural or a priori knowledge. Rather, the arguments suggest that the verification of a normative proposition very often includes practical considerations which employ the formal logic of both inductive and deductive reasoning.

For example, the latter arguments suggest that the Inuit did not intuit or naturally know that infanticide and involuntary euthanasia are "right", but appeared to have inferred the truth of this proposition from the practical consideration that, given their environment, these actions were necessary for the survival of their society. Nor do the arguments in any way imply that the Callatians intuited or naturally knew that eating the bodies of their dead fathers is right, but rather, that they appear to have inferred this from their religious beliefs, primarily the belief that the souls of the members of a previous generation could be unified with those of the succeeding generation, through the physical consumption of the dead members of their society.

It appears, then, that the traditional arguments against moral relativism provide only marginal support for non-naturalism;
they do not ultimately solve the problem faced by it regarding moral disagreements, and they appear to contradict the notion that the truth-value of a normative proposition is determined \textit{a priori}, intuitively, or naturally known. As a result, the advocate of non-naturalism must turn to a second line of defense, and appeal to the arguments which some non-naturalists have constructed themselves to combat the problem of moral disparity.

The latter argue that moral disagreements are no mystery; they stem from "intuitional errors". According to non-naturalists, people can be swayed by emotion, or the habit of reason, and so miss what their "inner eye sees", or what their moral sense is telling them. Otherwise, they would easily be able to intuit or naturally recognize what is good or bad, right or wrong. Unfortunately, such an argument also creates more problems for non-naturalism than it resolves.

The admission that "intuitional errors" are possible raises a very important question: how does one tell the difference between an intuitional error and a genuine intuition, [or genuine natural knowledge from non-genuine natural knowledge]? The non-naturalist would reply to this question by arguing that a lack of emotional and rational bias is the mark of the genuine intuition, and it is this which distinguishes it from the intuitional error. But such a reply not only makes a genuine moral intuition, or natural moral knowledge, at best extremely difficult for most
human beings to isolate, [which from a practical standpoint
defeats the purpose of advising them to listen to their intuitions
in order to determine what actions are right and wrong], it also
provides no way of resolving the inevitable, and all too common
dilemma which arises when two or more people claim to genuinely
intuit, or naturally know, the objective veracity of the same
normative proposition differently."

Needless to say, the non-naturalist must argue that such
dilemmas do not really arise, i.e., that the dilemmas themselves
are not genuine. In other words, a non-naturalist must argue that
one, or perhaps even each of the conflicting parties does not
actually have a genuine intuition of the objective truth-value of
the normative claim which is in dispute. But such an argument is
problematic.

First of all, each of the dissenting parties, on appealing
solely to intuition or natural knowledge, does not formally
provide any emotional or rational grounds as justification for his
or her respective position. Secondly, any other possible biases
affecting the stance of one or all of the parties, [e.g. cultural
or environmental or personal biases], all of which may be alleged
to be apparent to an "objective observer", must be said to apply
equally to each of them, as well as to the observer. This is
because every human being experiences a certain culture or
cultures, develops in a certain environment, and forms personal
tastes and has a personal history. And so it follows that non-naturalists will be unable to show, without being accused of bias or arbitrariness themselves, [as a result of appearing to favour their own, or one of the other party's biases], exactly how prejudice of any kind has meant intuitional error for one or even all of the people involved in a moral dispute. But then, by what means can a non-naturalist demonstrate that an intuitional error is present in such a situation except through the appeal to an additional "genuine intuition" of his or her own, [since this is the only criterion for settling moral disputes which non-naturalism can provide]? The answer is "by no other means", and the result is either moral scepticism or moral solipsism.

On the one hand, scepticism results from the vicious regress which ensues as soon as the "genuineness" of an intuition, or of natural knowledge is said to be determined by the appeal to a further genuine intuition, or to further natural knowledge. What can determine the genuineness of this second intuition, except a further genuine intuition, etc.? The result, of course, is that the necessary "genuineness" is never actually determined, and this inspires the sceptic to conclude that people cannot know the truth-value of any normative proposition if this requires a "genuine intuition", or genuine natural knowledge.

According to basic or "traditional" non-naturalism, the only way to circumvent such an impasse seems to lie in the argument
that each human being has available to him or her, by means of introspection, the ability to determine whether emotion or the habit of reason, or any other prejudicial impediment, is causing him or her to make an intuitional error. And so it follows that each human being has the ability to determine the genuineness of his or her own intuitions or natural knowledge, but not the genuineness of any other person's intuitions or natural knowledge, [since we can only introspect ourselves]. The result is that, indeed, the genuineness of intuitions can be determined, but only sceptistically, for under such conditions, the sufficient evidence, [i.e. the "genuineness" of the intuition], which verifies the normative claim is, in itself, wholly incommunicable.

In other words, I can know what I genuinely intuit or naturally know as good or bad, right or wrong, but no one else can know this, and nor can I know what anyone else genuinely intuits, or naturally knows. They can tell me, of course, and I can tell them. But this provides neither of us with the sufficient evidence we seek for the truth of the other's claim, since we both know that the other could be lying. But if every human being has access only to his or her own "moral sense", and can never be certain that anyone else really shares it, [especially given the existence of moral disagreements], then if non-naturalism is correct, it does not appear to have succeeded in establishing the objectivity of ethics at all, but rather the opposite. It has shown that moral
knowledge is analogous to knowledge of one's own subjective states, and so is itself, nothing more than purely subjective.

Given such difficulties, can non-naturalism be salvaged? Hospers describes an approach which some non-naturalists use to try avoid the above difficulties. He states that some non-naturalists argue that the truth-values of only a few basic moral propositions are known intuitively, naturally, or a priori, and that these are known universally, while all the others are derived from these, and are known by conventional means, [i.e., empirically or rationally]. According to such non-naturalists, it is with respect to the latter propositions that moral errors and moral disputes arise. But Hospers claims that this approach only manages to avoid a few of the difficulties confronting non-naturalism, since people disagree even about so-called "basic" moral claims.

However, as will be seen shortly, the Thomistic approach to ethics provides a way to explain not only the errors and disputes which arise about "derived" moral claims, but also about the "basic" ones. As will also be seen, such an approach incorporates elements of both non-naturalism and naturalism. The result is that, remarkably, the moral philosophy of Saint Thomas can be interpreted as both naturalistic and non-naturalistic.

Of course, as already indicated, it is my position that modern ethicists have generally failed to recognize the real
significance of the Thomistic approach to moral science, and how it resolves the problem of the objectivity of ethics. Even those sympathetic to Aquinas' moral philosophy are inclined to regard it as either exclusively naturalistic, or exclusively non-naturalistic, and the result is that they leave it vulnerable to the difficulties latent in each of those strategies.

Why is Thomistic ethics misinterpreted in this way, and what are the details of these misinterpretations? Sections Three and Four of this discussion will attempt to answer such questions, for the answers will play an essential role in understanding what is really at work in Thomistic ethics. This is because, as is often the case in any pursuit of truth, recognizing where it does not lie is often the key to uncovering its real location.

* * * * * * * *
Section Three: A General Hypothesis and Critique

From the discussion in Section Two, it appears that both naturalists and non-naturalists fail to resolve the problem of ethical objectivity, i.e., to provide a means by which to demonstrate the objective truth-value of basic normative propositions, a task which is really synonymous with demonstrating the legitimacy of moral science. As seen, they present radically different approaches. The first argues that the reasoning or method governing the verification of normative propositions is the method of the natural sciences, while the second argues that the method governing the verification of such propositions involves the appeal to what is intuited or naturally known. And yet neither of the two approaches appears very successful. What is the correct solution?

Interestingly enough, the strengths of the naturalist approach appear to be the weaknesses of the non-naturalist approach, and vice-versa. For example, the naturalist is plagued with the difficulty of bridging the gap between the descriptive and the prescriptive, i.e., of explaining the relation between fact and value, but the non-naturalist avoids this problem altogether. On the other hand, naturalism has no difficulty explaining moral polemics. For a naturalist, circumstances often dictate whether a particular action is right or wrong, and since

-75-
circumstances can change, or be different in different places and at different times, it is no wonder, from the naturalist's perspective, that people express the same moral values differently. Furthermore, according to a naturalist, there is no reason why errors in moral reasoning should be regarded as any more significant than errors made in other scientific inquiries. For example, in physics or biology errors are common, even for the specialist, let alone the layman. Since a knowledge and understanding of all relevant facts plays a crucial role in any scientific inquiry, in addition to sufficient analytical training, the limits of a human being in either of these areas will affect his efforts to arrive at truth. So the naturalist argument is not weakened by the existence of moral disagreements and errors; rather, such phenomena even appear to lend it some credibility. But this is certainly not the case for the non-naturalist.

The two theories, then, seem to represent polar extremes, both in their approaches to solving the problem of ethical objectivity, and in their respective strengths and weaknesses. Could this mean that the correct solution to such a problem is some middle ground between the two? Of what would this consist? The difficulties with naturalism and non-naturalism show that normative propositions appear to be verifiable neither as synthetic a posteriori, nor as analytic a priori, and nor as synthetic a priori. Is the proper solution to involve a mixture of
two, or perhaps even all three of these different forms of verification? Such a solution would require demonstrating that not all normative propositions are the same, and hence, that different forms of verification apply to different propositions. This, of course, would probably involve the notion that normative terms have different meanings when predicated in different contexts, for this appears to be the most logical route by which to defend the position that the predication of the same normative terms involves different modes of verification.

And yet, there can be no such thing as a science of normative ethics if normative terms are predicated equivocally, if in different contexts they have radically different meanings. A science depends upon some kind of uniformity and consistency in its subject matter, for as seen in Section One, science involves the attempt to isolate that which is uniform and consistent. And so if this hybrid approach is to succeed, it would have to show that the different meanings which ethical terms have in different contexts are somehow interconnected or correlated. Finally, it goes without saying that if such an approach is to make any headway in resolving the problem of ethical objectivity, it must do all of the above in such a way as to avoid the pitfalls associated with naturalism and non-naturalism considered separately.
Is such an approach viable? My hypothesis is that it is not only viable, but that some of its basic precepts are advanced within the ethical theory of Aristotle, and then developed and brought to completion in the moral philosophy of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Based upon a particular insight into the method of moral science, an insight which shows that, as a practical science, its method conforms neither to that of theoretical science, as endorsed by the modern naturalist, nor to the method of the modern non-naturalist, who alleges that all moral knowledge is intuited or naturally known, Aristotle and Aquinas demonstrate that the meaning of the normative term "good" can indeed be defined, but not univocally; i.e. that the term does not mean exactly the same thing when predicated in different contexts. But nor is its meaning purely equivocal. Rather, as Aristotle states, the term "good" is predicated either "by analogy", or it is a term which is predicated "pros hen", i.e., it is a term which has a primary meaning which applies only to a very specific context, and derivative meanings applicable to other contexts, meanings which are causally related to the primary meaning.

In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle provides his most famous example of a pros hen equivocal term: the term "health". Such a term is predicated in many contexts: a human being can be "healthy", and so can an apple, or exercise, or a complexion. The term health does not mean exactly the same thing in these
contexts: what makes a human being "healthy", is not the same as what makes an apple healthy, or exercise, or a complexion. But nor do the different uses of the term have completely different meanings, for in each case, they always have a consistent contrary meaning: they all mean the opposite of "unhealthy". Aristotle concludes from this that the term "health" has a primary meaning, and various derivative meanings which are causally related to the primary meaning.

In its primary sense, "health" signifies some form of physiological and/or psychological harmony in an organic substance. In its derivative senses, it signifies what causes, or is caused by the physiological and/or psychological harmony in an organic substance. To say that a human being is "healthy" is, then, to predicate the term in its primary sense. On the other hand, to say that an apple is "healthy", or exercise, or a complexion, is to predicate the term in one of its derivative senses. An apple, or exercise are healthy in so far as they cause health in an organic substance; a complexion is healthy in so far as it is a sign of health, or results from health in an organic substance.

Aristotle states in the Eudemian Ethics that he regards the term "good" as a pros hen equivocal. However, as quoted above, in the Nicomachean Ethics, arguably a later work, he is less decisive; to repeat, here he states that "good" is either predicated
analogously or pros hen, and he leaves the matter largely unresolved. Setting aside such indecisiveness, it is clear nonetheless that Aristotle regards "goodness" as a term which is neither purely equivocal, nor purely univocal; it is a term which has different meanings in different contexts, but whose "homonymy" is not the result of "mere chance," and it is this Aristotelian position which appears to have an enormous influence upon the Thomistic approach to moral science.

Inspired by Aristotle, Aquinas too regards the term good as having neither a purely equivocal nor a purely univocal meaning; he seeks to isolate what amounts to a primary sense of the term, and then to analyze derivative senses which are causally related to the former. It is in this way that St. Thomas attempts to establish that normative propositions do indeed differ in kind, in so far as they are based upon the different pros hen meanings of the term "good". Furthermore, he holds that these different normative propositions involve different forms of verification, and he argues that all of these forms are objective, because they are derived from what he holds to be an objective verification of the primary sense of goodness.

With regard to the latter point, it will be shown in Section Five that Saint Thomas facilitates a complete meta-ethical system whereby he validly argues for a very intimate connection between metaphysics, natural philosophy and ethics. More specifically,
Aquinas provides a valid argument establishing the objective existence and nature of goodness in general, an argument from which he derives the objective existence and nature of moral goodness in particular.

It is my contention, then, that the success of the Thomistic approach to ethics depends first and foremost upon the objective verification of a single, primary meta-ethical proposition: that which establishes the primary sense of goodness which he regards as conjoined pros hen to all other senses. Subsequently, his success also depends upon his ability to apply meta-ethics to ethics. In other words, Aquinas must show that the objective meaning of goodness is applicable to human life, and human action, for these are the concern of moral science.

It is not enough to show, objectively, the meaning of the term "good"; for if this meaning has no bearing on human life or action, then it is of little use to ethics. In other words, one must show how the primary sense of "goodness" is connected to human life, for unless there is such a thing as human "goodness", the science which investigates this will be a pseudo-science; one must be able to proceed from meta-ethics, to ethics proper. To provide a further clarification of the latter point, it is helpful to return to the example of the term "health".

As said, Aristotle identifies this term as a pros hen equivocal; he shows that it has a primary sense, and what this
sense involves, and that it has derivative senses conjoined to the primary sense. Now, if Aristotle's purpose was to provide this illustration for the sake of justifying the objectivity of a science of human health, [i.e. a human medical science], he would have to show that the primary sense of health is applicable to human beings, or that there is such a thing as "human health" which has an objective and universal content.

In the same way, if Aquinas is to use the demonstration that the term "good" is a pros hen equivocal, or a term with a primary sense, and derivative senses conjoined to the primary sense, in order to justify the objectivity of a science of human goodness, he must show how and why the primary sense of "good" applies to human beings or human life. In other words, he will have to show that there is such a thing as human goodness, or that there is a primary sense of human goodness, so as to justify a single science of human goodness, [i.e. ethics].

As suggested in Section Two, the problem of ethical objectivity could be resolved if a single, basic ethical principle or proposition was shown to be objectively true, for then the veracity of other normative propositions could be deduced from it. Of course, as seen in the analysis of naturalism, what this really means is that an objective definition of the "human good" would provide a solution to the problem of ethical objectivity or establish the legitimacy of moral science.
It is ultimately such a definition which Saint Thomas' ethical theory provides, building upon an Aristotelian foundation. And no doubt, this makes the Thomistic approach very similar to that of the modern naturalist; they both seek to define the "human good", and then deduce the veracity of other normative claims on the basis of this definition. But as will be seen shortly, the moral theory which he constructs also leads Aquinas to a conclusion which bears a certain resemblance to the basic stance of modern non-naturalism.

The latter points will have direct bearing on the task of the present section, and that immediately following it, which is to consider the misconceptions at work in some modern interpretations of Thomistic ethics. As discussed in the Preface and Section Two, these misconceptions tend to fall into two groups: those which allege that Aquinas is purely naturalistic in his approach to ethics, and those which hold that he is purely non-naturalistic in this approach. It is important that one understands the nature of these misconceptions, for together they shed significant light upon what is really at work in Saint Thomas' position.

* * * *

(i) Some General Remarks About Going Astray

I suggested above, as well as at the conclusion of Section
Two, that there are both naturalistic and non-naturalistic elements in the moral theory of Aquinas, that the theory is really a hybrid of these two approaches. From the standpoint of modern Thomistic commentary, a couple of examples of which will be examined in Section Four, such elements are philosophically irreconcilable; they appear to be viewed as creating a tension in the Thomistic argument which threatens to undermine it. As a result, in what I can only interpret as an apparent attempt to eliminate this perceived tension in their subject, modern commentators tend to favour only one of its dimensions. Indeed, they have attempted to reduce Thomistic ethics to something which I shall demonstrate that it is not: either solely naturalistic or solely non-naturalistic in scope.

Of course, the mistake of attempting such a reduction is understandable. For one thing, *prima facie* the approaches of naturalism and non-naturalism, in their traditional forms as described in Section Two, appear to be wholly incompatible. After all, normative properties are either "transcendental" or "natural" - they cannot be both, can they? We either naturally know or intuit the principles of moral conduct, or we determine them rationally - it must be one or the other, must it not? Or could there be a third alternative, one which recognizes what is accurate in both approaches to ethics, and how they can be reconciled, [how, in fact, a science of normative ethics is viable

-84-
only if they are reconciled].

Unfortunately, it appears to me that modern Thomistic commentators are unable to fathom the latter alternative. Swayed perhaps by an additional reason to be misled in their various interpretations, and in an apparent effort to make sense of Thomistic ethics, or at least to maintain, in their eyes, some form of consistency in its arguments, they fail to gauge its whole significance.

This additional reason for the reductivist stance which modern commentators take toward Thomistic ethics involves how it expresses a far more pronounced hybrid character. Simply put, and in spite of his profound philosophical insights, Saint Thomas Aquinas was, first and foremost, a theologian; and his ethics is at least as much a moral theology, as it is a moral philosophy.

The latter point is not lost on any of Saint Thomas' critics; it is difficult to imagine how it could be, given much of the content of his works. But there is an important distinction which needs to be made regarding the theological aspect of those works which modern commentators sometimes fail to make: it is the distinction between revealed theology and natural theology, [or what, from a philosophical standpoint, is really a branch of metaphysics]. Revealed theology involves that which reason can determine about God from the starting point of certain articles of faith, or aided by what is held to be divinely revealed about Him.
On the other hand, natural theology involves what reason alone can determine about God, or what unaided reason, using only what is available to it through observation and the rules of logic, can know about the Divine.

Needless to say, there is a great deal of revealed theology in Saint Thomas' thought, including his ethics; but there is also a great deal of natural theology to be found therein. And although these two forms of theological speculation often coincide in his works, with Aquinas drawing the same conclusions from "faith" as he does from "reason", they must not be confused or conflated.

But more often than not, such distinct forms of theology are confused and conflated by modern scholars attempting to grasp the nature of Thomistic ethics. The latter group appears to be inclined to dismiss whatever they find unacceptable in Saint Thomas' moral theory as non-philosophical, or more specifically, as strictly a matter of revealed theology. Those inclined, for instance, to regard Aquinas' approach to ethics as solely non-naturalistic, tend to interpret his naturalistic tendencies as expressing views which he holds on faith. In other words, they interpret these views as non-philosophical. And of course, conversely, those who are inclined to regard Saint Thomas' approach to ethics as wholly naturalistic, tend to see the non-naturalistic elements of his thought as stemming from his revealed theology.

-86-
As I shall touch upon shortly, and then demonstrate in much greater detail in Sections Four and Five, the inclinations set out above are incorrect. It is certainly true that what Saint Thomas holds on faith often influences and inspires the direction he takes in his philosophical speculations.\(^1\) It is also true, as suggested previously, that such speculations often correlate with the arguments he advances when he delves into revealed theology. But in no way does this mean that Aquinas fails to provide authentic philosophical arguments for matters which he also holds on faith. Indeed, he makes explicit distinctions between which of his positions are solely matters of faith, which are solely matters of reason, and which are matters of both faith and reason.\(^1\) Furthermore, when dealing with specific subjects, he is careful to point out when he is arguing from faith and when he is arguing from reason.\(^1\)

And so just because certain conclusions which Aquinas draws happen to coincide or be consistent with what he holds on faith as, for instance, a theist, and more specifically, a Christian, does not mean that they should be automatically set aside as "biased" or "tainted" conclusions, as non-philosophical dogma. To explain the latter point further, it is helpful to cite an obvious example in which Thomism is often misrepresented, one with which Thomistic scholars are all certainly familiar.
It is usually popular among students of St. Thomas' thought, especially those already well acquainted with that of Aristotle, to conclude rather hastily at the start of their study that the former is but a "baptism" or "Christianization" of the latter. In other words, new students of Aquinas' philosophy are apt to make the mistake of reducing it to the simplistic formula of "Aristotelianism plus Christian revelation". They are led to this conclusion because *prima facie* this is indeed what Thomism appears to be. But as soon as these students delve just a little further into Aquinas' thought, they realize quite abruptly how mistaken they are, and how there is a genuine philosophy at work which is unique to the Angelic Doctor. The students learn that while Aquinas has many influences and inspirations — Christianity and Aristotelianism numbering among the more prominent — he has a philosophy all his own.

Of course, I do not mean to suggest via the above example that the errors latent in modern interpretations of Thomistic ethics are in anyway as straightforward and naive as those made by novices regarding the whole of Thomism. The situation is far more complex and sophisticated for professional scholars attempting to extricate and explicate the specifics of Saint Thomas' moral philosophy. Yet the two situations are still analogous, for both appear to convey the same bias toward their subject. The novice does this out of ignorance; he simply does not know any better.

-88-
But the scholar, who ought to know better, does it, I suspect, more for convenience, and for the admirable, although misguided motive of trying both to defend Aquinas' moral philosophy, as well as to make it more accessible in the modern context.

It is convenient, for example, to regard the naturalism of Thomistic ethics as derived from revealed theology, and then proceed to ignore it, when one is convinced that only a non-naturalistic approach to ethics is philosophically viable, when the modern climate is generally hostile to naturalistic approaches, and when one perceives the genuine non-naturalistic character of some of Saint Thomas' arguments.

Nonetheless, the fact is that Saint Thomas never takes a position in his revealed theology which directly contradicts a position he has taken philosophically. The closest he ever comes to incongruity in his thought is when he maintains that certain articles of faith can be neither proved nor disproved by reason alone. In other words, he feels that if something is true by faith, it is either true by reason also, or it is simply inaccessible to reason. Hence, it would be quite inconsistent indeed, if Saint Thomas were a naturalist in his moral theology, and a non-naturalist in his moral philosophy, [or vice-versa], as modern commentators seem to suggest, especially if these two approaches are truly incompatible. If that were the case, then Aquinas would be guilty of an error which his modern critics
consider so obvious that it would render his position foolish. On the other hand, if the approaches are not incompatible, then Aquinas has recognized something perhaps so subtle that his critics keep missing it.

Indeed, whatever else may be true, it will be shown that Aquinas himself appears to have believed that naturalism and non-naturalism in ethics are wholly compatible, or at least that they do not necessarily contradict each other. This will become clear even if the dichotomy in his approach to ethics is to be best explained with reference to his dual role as both theologian and philosopher.

But such a dichotomy is not to be best explained in this way, because again I must stress that Aquinas provides philosophical arguments supporting both the naturalistic and non-naturalistic elements of his moral philosophy. If this were not the case, then there would not exist two prominent schools of thought concerning how to interpret Thomistic ethics; there would simply be no grounds for debate between them. And yet there are such grounds, for both cite philosophical reasons in support of their respective stances. And although I believe that these stances are somewhat misguided, I will show that those taking them are in no way wholly misguided.

What, then, is to be made of the polemic surrounding Saint Thomas' moral philosophy? How can the debate concerning its
naturalism and non-naturalism be settled? The answer, it seems to me, lies in unraveling the exact role played by metaphysics and natural theology in Thomistic ethics. Usually interpreted as central only to the naturalism in Aquinas' moral theory, his metaphysics and natural theology are also directly connected to his non-naturalism, and are the key to understanding how the two approaches are in harmony.

Of course, those inclined to interpret Thomistic ethics as wholly non-naturalistic, and who conclude subsequently that Aquinas supported the autonomy of ethics from metaphysics, will find the above remark quite alarming. In response to them I would like to say that I agree that Saint Thomas regarded ethics as autonomous, and that it was precisely his metaphysics which led him to do so. In Sections Four and Five, I shall elaborate on the latter point as I provide an explication of the validity of Aquinas' entire argument for the legitimacy of moral science, which includes his naturalism and non-naturalism, and how their harmony is ultimately founded in his theoretical speculations.

For now, however, it is necessary to describe briefly some of the main postulates in that argument, as well as its general structure, for only then can both the specific insights and specific errors of Saint Thomas' modern critics be fully appraised.

* * * * *

-91-
(ii) The Naturalism and Non-naturalism of Aquinas

On numerous occasions throughout this section, I have referred to the naturalism and non-naturalism of Thomistic ethics, and I have stated that modern critics tend to favour only one or the other of these two dimensions, apparently unable to provide an holistic account of Aquinas' moral theory. But I have said little about the specific contents of that theory. In particular, I have not described the elements in it which show that Aquinas really does employ both of these approaches in his effort to establish the objectivism, realism, and absolutism in ethics which he endorses. I shall, of course, provide such elements subsequently in this discussion, partly in Section Four, and then more thoroughly in Section Five, which is specifically dedicated to that task; but because I have claimed that they are misrepresented in modern thought, some mention of them now is clearly warranted.

My position is that the naturalism of Thomistic ethics is the most misrepresented of its dimensions, both by laymen and specialists alike. Although best described as a "natural law theory", [a title which has obvious naturalistic connotations], it is not, as Germain Grisez rightly points out, to be confused, [as it often seems to be confused], with "scholastic natural law theory", the kind associated with the thought of Francisco Suarez. Saint Thomas, for example, does not argue along the simple line
that because human nature is a certain way, e.g. rational, it therefore follows that human beings ought to act in certain way, i.e., in a way consistent with their rational nature. Not only would such an argument have made Aquinas plainly guilty of the naturalistic fallacy, [regardless of the fact that such a fallacy was not formally recognized in the middle ages], it also would have no doubt appeared either redundant or obscure to him.

In one sense, human beings always act "according to their nature". For whether such actions are deemed virtuous or vicious, as long as they fall within the domain of the moral, [and so qualify as what Aristotle calls praxis], they are, according to Aquinas, human acts, or acts deliberately conceived. In other words, they are acts which can only spring from a rational or intelligent nature, and so in that sense, they are always consistent or in accordance with it. Reason is, by definition, at work in all moral conduct, and so in one sense there is no point in arguing that it ought to be. Of course, Saint Thomas does ultimately argue that it ought to be, i.e., that right reason is the key to correct moral conduct, and to the ultimate fulfilment of human beings; and this obviously suggests that he means something far more complex than the general point that reason should be at work in moral conduct which, as said, he takes as a given.
The latter point also suggests that there is far more to the Thomistic argument which concludes that correct human conduct is rational conduct, than simply the fallacious argument that this follows from the rational nature of human beings. According to Aquinas, there is a right way to reason in practical matters or matters of action, and a wrong way to reason; the right way contributes to virtuous behaviour, and human fulfilment; the wrong way contributes to vicious behaviour, and human depravity. There are also, according to Aquinas, such things as "right desires", and "wrong desires", which together with reason are the efficient causes of moral action. Clearly, what has no desires does not act; and as said, what does not reason does not deliberately act, or does not act morally.

But to speak of "right or wrong reason" and "right or wrong desire" is already to be speaking in normative terms. What is the basis for this terminology? Can it be found in a description of human nature, given that the latter seems to provide no means for making normative judgements about, and normative distinctions between the expression and conduct of natural human faculties? To answer these questions, one must, as it were, "scratch below the surface", and examine some of the presuppositions underlying Saint Thomas' moral theory.

First and foremost, it is clear that Aquinas accepts from Aristotle the doctrine of the species, the view that there are
distinct, objective and universal natural kinds, and along with it, that there exists a distinct, objective and universal human nature. But in Thomistic ethics, human nature represents only the most proximate principle of morality; it has a transcendent source. [It is primarily in this regard that one can begin to see how his position diverges from that of Aristotle, a point which I hope to explore in future inquiries]. This much, however, can be said for now: Aquinas generally accepts Aristotle's philosophy of nature, which includes his doctrine of the species, his concepts of entelecheia and dunamis, and his arguments for the Prime Mover, and for the primacy of final causality in all natural processes. Aquinas also accepts the teleological and eudaimonistic character of Aristotelian ethics, which is inspired by the doctrines named above. But Aquinas radically develops these doctrines, as well as the approach to ethics which they support, apparently subscribing to the view that they require much greater substantiation than that provided within the limits of Aristotelianism [the exact reasons for which are beyond the scope of the present discussion].

For example, according to Aristotle, the primary sense of goodness in reality, the source of nature's teleology, is ultimately identified as the Pure Actuality of the Prime Mover or God. As will be explained in Section Five, Aquinas agrees with this view, but with an important qualification: he infuses the Aristotelian metaphysic with a philosophical creationism
inconceivable to the Philosopher, a philosophical creationism which has dramatic ethical implications. And herein lies the naturalism of Thomistic ethics, a naturalism which revolves around the philosophical arguments for, and the philosophical implications of: (i). The existence of God, and what can be known about the nature of that existence, (ii). God's unique status as Creator, or source and maintenance of all being, and (iii). The fact that God created deliberately or with purpose, and what that purpose involves. Aquinas utilizes these arguments, and the implications they have, to build a solid foundation for a teleological philosophy of nature, and subsequently, a teleological and eudaimonistic moral philosophy.

The idea that there is an ultimate goal to human life, and that this goal is intimately connected to, [indeed, only conceptually distinct from], the human ergon or function, which itself corresponds to the actualization of the potencies implicit in human nature qua human, are central themes of Aristotelian ethics. They are wrought, albeit loosely, from his metaphysics and natural philosophy, in which he argues that the operations of all natural substances are oriented of necessity toward the goal of bringing to complete realization the potencies they bear as substances of a specific kind.:

Aquinas develops the latter position, arguably orchestrating a much tighter connection between metaphysics and ethics than
Aristotle. It is this connection which allows Aquinas to demonstrate that nature is of necessity teleological, and why this is so. Having done this, Saint Thomas can then apply directly the principles he has discovered in his theoretical inquiries to the practical science of ethics. He can show not only that human activity is goal-oriented, but that it must have an ultimate goal which can only involve the complete realization of the natural potencies inherent in being human.

To the objection that Aquinas is guilty of the naturalistic fallacy if he has deduced normative principles from theoretical ones, the following reply can be made, [one which I shall develop further in Section Four]. If Saint Thomas has shown that nature is necessarily teleological, i.e., that the operations of all natural substances are of necessity goal-oriented or goal-driven, then he has simultaneously shown that there is prescriptiveness, normativity, or "oughtness" implicit in all natural processes. These processes are perforce directed, driven, or prescribed; and thus, they imply that nature is normative. In other words, such processes implicitly point to "what ought", since the goal to which something is directed is always designated as "what ought" [i.e., is implicitly prescribed] from the standpoint of that which is directed toward it.

Such normativity or prescriptiveness, as implicit in the teleological character of nature, is not, then, the result of
human whim, preference, or fancy; rather, it is theoretically discoverable, and can be applied to the practical sphere. In other words, if there is normativity or prescriptiveness implicit in the descriptions of nature, [and human beings are a part of nature], then such normativity or prescriptiveness can be got out of the descriptions of nature. There is no illicit transition from the descriptive to the prescriptive if, in fact, the prescriptive forms part of the descriptive.

My position is that the latter is precisely the line of argument one finds in Saint Thomas' attempt to establish the objectivity of ethics. Aquinas seeks out the prescriptiveness or normativity implicit in the descriptions of natural processes. He knows that this normativity or prescriptiveness must be present, and what in general it involves, because it is implied by the teleological character of nature, and indeed, of all creation, which he discovers in his metaphysics and natural theology.

As suggested previously, Aquinas' moral theory has, then, a meta-ethical starting point; and it is from here that a rational deduction can be carried out of the basic principles governing correct human behaviour.

But as I shall explain further in Sections Four and Five, there is another method by which such principles are determined by Aquinas; while they are deducible from the theoretical principles established in Saint Thomas' metaphysics and natural theology,
they are also manifest in the processes of what Saint Thomas calls "practical reasoning"—reasoning directed to the performance of action—as well as in the basic inclinations and desires of human beings. This is because, as said, the teleological character of nature entails that there exist fundamental prescriptions or directives implicit in the operations of all natural substances.

Given that human beings are natural substances, [actual independent and discreet entities of a specific kind], it follows from the above that there are fundamental directives or prescriptions implicit in all human operations. And since, as seen, the human operation at the basis of moral conduct is practical reasoning, i.e., deliberation, [along with desire], it also follows that there must be fundamental moral prescriptions or directives implicit in practical reasoning itself. In other words, practical reasoning is governed by its own intrinsic principles. And it is precisely with regard to these principles that the non-naturalism of Aquinas becomes apparent.

As I shall fully explicate in Sections Four and Five, if practical reason, which governs moral conduct, is operating according to certain principles, at some level it must be aware of them. Now since it naturally operates in accordance with them, this awareness in practical reason does not require a demonstration or rational deduction. In other words, such an awareness need not be formal or explicit; it certainly can be so,
but it must at least be what is perhaps best described as *intuitive* or *natural*. To explain the latter point further, an analogy is often drawn both by Aquinas and his commentators between the operation of practical reasoning with that of theoretical reasoning, an analogy which I will readdress in succeeding sections.

According to Aquinas, the first principle of theoretical reasoning is, of course, the principle of non-contradiction, which states that "something cannot both be and not be at the same time in the same respect". Certainly, such a principle is not formally or explicitly cognized every time someone abides by it, nor does its use presuppose some prior formal account of the principle by all who employ it. Rather, the awareness of the principle of non-contradiction, which accompanies its almost ceaseless use by reason, begins as, and for the most part continues to be something *intuitive* or naturally known. Indeed, while such a principle can be theoretically explained and explicitly invoked, Saint Thomas points out that the mind's awareness of it begins with an intuitive grasp as soon as the intellect first encounters its natural object: being. It is at that point that the intentional activity of the mind itself can begin, in an effort to understand its natural object, with the principle of non-contradiction serving to direct it.
In similar fashion, Aquinas holds that practical reason is intuitively or naturally aware of the principles directing and governing it. The reasoning behind this position is straightforward. Given that human beings do, in fact, act, their actions are, by definition, preceded by deliberation or practical reasoning. In other words, human actions presuppose deliberation. But deliberation presupposes that people have ends which are not deliberate, [this is because deliberation assumes prior knowledge or awareness of some end]. Thus, deliberation is contradicted by the notion that all ends are deliberate: if all ends are deliberate, deliberation would never commence or arise. Hence, deliberation is consequent upon people being directed to certain ends about which they do not deliberate, and upon their being naturally aware of the directives to pursue them.

These directives constitute the principles of deliberation or practical reasoning. The first is based upon or derived from the general end orientation of human nature, and simply prescribes the human pursuit of ends, and avoidance of their contrary. In other words, the first or most basic of the principles of deliberation directs reason by simply stating that there is something to be done by it, i.e., that it is directed to an end beyond it, a telos, or better still, a goal or "good", and that it is to avoid the anti-thesis of this goal, the anti-goal or non-good, which constitutes "evil". It is easy to see how such a principle must be
intrinsic to the operation of practical reasoning. For just as the principle of non-contradiction is intrinsic to the operation of theoretical reasoning, in so far as its object is being, and the principle is a basic articulation of what it means to be; the first principle of practical reasoning is really a basic articulation of the object of this operation: praxis or deliberate action.

There is no such thing as a deliberate act without an end or purpose, for a deliberate act is, by definition, one which is purposeful, or one which aims at bringing something to pass, if only the action itself. So when the first principle of practical reasoning states that the "good", [i.e., the goal or purpose], "is to be done", [i.e., is to be achieved], at the very least— it is expressing or articulating what is intrinsic in the object of practical reasoning, the deliberate act, which is that it is intended to realize some end, to achieve a goal or good.

Of course, the nature of this goal or good to which practical reason is directed by its first principle is, on the level of intuition or natural knowledge, largely opaque. Aquinas holds that practical reason discovers more of the nature of this good through the awareness of other, more specific principles directing it. In so far as its first principle directs it to the pursuit of an end, and natural human inclinations are themselves end-driven, the secondary principles of practical reason are uncovered through the
expression of these inclinations. In other words, the first principle of practical reason directs it to the fulfilment of an end or good; indeed, reason is practical only to the extent that it is directed to an end by this principle. But what end? Having been oriented to the pursuit of an end, reason requires further guidance. This guidance is provided to reason through the ends presented to it by natural human inclinations, without which it would have nothing to pursue.

In Section Five, I shall explain that according to Aquinas, natural human inclinations represent active potencies specified or determined by the human form, or the act of being human. I shall also show how he argues that they are potencies directed to their own full actualization or completion, and how this explains why they are experienced as inclinations, and why they present reason with specific ends or goals which reason then articulates in the form of specific prescriptions or normative principles by which to direct action. It is important to note, of course, that according to Aquinas, these inclinations supplying practical reason with specific ends, to the extent that they are in fact undertaken by reason, take on a status beyond that of natural inclinations; they take on the status of natural law. This is yet another position in Thomistic ethics which is often misconstrued.

According to Aquinas, "law" is defined as "an ordinance of reason directing action to the common good and promulgated". In
addition, "natural law" is defined as "the participation of eternal law in the rational creature". And finally, "eternal law" itself refers to those principles in the Mind and Will of God directing every creature, and indeed, all creation as a whole, to a specific end: God, Himself, or the imitation or expression of God's essence in finite form. Aquinas discovers the latter principles in his natural theology, and what exactly they involve and why will be explored in Sections Four and Five. The present point is simply that it is ultimately the eternal law of God, as implied by His end in creating, which serves as the foundation for the teleological character of nature, and the source for the normative principles or prescriptions implicit in this teleology as it bears on the human being.

Within the human being, natural law refers to certain cognized principles or prescriptions of nature's teleology insofar as they bear on, or are expressed in, the human form, and fall within the scope of human reason. Unlike in other, non-rational creatures, [including inanimate ones], in human beings, some of the principles or prescriptions of nature's teleology are not merely manifest in the manner of natural tendencies, instincts, or potentialities, but also as laws. As will be explained in ensuing sections, certain of these principles are seated in reason as soon as the natural awareness of them is gained, and this gives them the status of law: they become "ordinances of reason directing
action to the common good and promulgated". In other words, once practical reason becomes aware, through its own operations, of the prescriptiveness implicit within the natural potencies of human nature, this prescriptiveness expresses itself as law.

Such an awareness, as said, is intuitive or natural. Aquinas states that no human being, [so long as he is conscious or not otherwise impaired], can be wholly ignorant of these laws. They point to what is intrinsically valuable from the human perspective, the human "goods" or ends: e.g., self-preservation, physical and mental well-being, knowledge, procreation, and friendship, etc. According to Saint Thomas, the value of such things does not require a demonstration; every human being intuits or naturally recognizes their value, as they are the ends or goods presented to practical reason, which in turn is directed to their fulfilment by its first principle: "the good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided".

In addition to its naturalism, my position is that there is, then, significant common ground between the moral theory of Aquinas, and what in the modern context is classified as a non-naturalistic approach to ethics: the view that certain normative principles are intuited or naturally known. And those who interpret Thomistic ethics as non-naturalistic, to the extent that they recognize this common ground, are correct in doing so. It is not my position, like some, that such an interpretation is not
really Thomistic at all; it is Thomistic, but it is not the only dimension of that moral theory. This is because, as suggested, underlying this non-naturalistic dimension is a more fundamental naturalistic approach to ethics: an approach which explains why certain normative principles are intuited or naturally known, and more importantly, [as I will explain in the following Section], why these principles are universally intuited or naturally known.

Regarding such an approach, I have already provided a brief explanation of how, if his argument succeeds, Aquinas would avoid the main problem confronting naturalism, i.e., the naturalistic fallacy. I shall elaborate on this explanation in Sections Four and Five, and show how his argument is, in fact, valid. But the question arises as to whether the non-naturalism in Thomistic ethics is also successful? Does Saint Thomas also avoid the problems latent in non-naturalism? As seen in Section Two, these problems involve how people disagree about morality, and how they feel that they make errors in what they judge to be right and wrong, or good and bad in human affairs. If it is true that Aquinas holds that all human beings by nature have an awareness of basic moral principles or prescriptions, i.e., the "laws of nature", how can such disagreements and errors occur?

* * * *
In answer to the question posed above, a threefold response can be offered in defense of Aquinas. It is a response which utilizes other facets of his moral theory, and which is quite unlike that described in Section Two as submitted by most modern non-naturalists in their unsuccessful efforts to counter the same difficulties.

First of all, while it is true that Saint Thomas holds that all human beings are naturally oriented to the pursuit of the same ends, those which natural law prescribes, and which together constitute the overall human good, he does not hold that the means to such ends are naturally ordained. In this regard, he is, of course, echoing Aristotle, who argues that human beings are naturally inclined to the pursuit of eudaimonia, [human fulfillment, or the full actualization of natural human potencies], and thus do not deliberate about, but "wish" for this end. However, according to Aristotle, people are completely free with regard to choosing the means [right or wrong] to eudaimonia; it is about these means that they deliberate, and it is often in this regard that they disagree and err about morality.

Indeed, it is perfectly conceivable, even plausible, that people who are given the same end, and who are each free to choose the means to it, should come to disagree and err about what
constitutes the correct means, or the means which will actually achieve the end. As said, in Saint Thomas' theory, natural law prescribes certain ends which together form the overall human good, or goal of human life. But it does not inform them as to the method by which they are to gain what is truly valuable; and there are a wide range of such methods, some considerably more pursuant than others.

It follows, therefore, that the fact that people can err and disagree about how they are to achieve what they find intrinsically good does not contradict Saint Thomas' argument that they are all, by nature, aware of what has intrinsic goodness. A simple distinction between ends and means, or between what has intrinsic value, and what has instrumental value, can serve to counter at least part of the difficulty with which moral disagreements and errors confront the non-naturalism of Thomistic ethics.

But such distinctions and qualifications do not counter the whole of this difficulty, for there are certainly cases in which people's moral disagreements and errors are not about what means they should take in pursuit of certain ends, they are about the ends themselves. How can Saint Thomas's position that we all naturally intuit the same ends, and that we are all naturally inclined toward them, possibly explain such cases? The answer to this question involves the remaining two aspects of my threefold
defense of Thomistic non-naturalism, and once again, it begins with the principal inspiration for that theory: the thought of Aristotle.

As seen, Aristotle holds that all people are naturally inclined to the pursuit of their ultimate end or good, which consists of the fulfilment of the natural potencies inherent in human nature: *eudaimonia*, human flourishing, or "happiness". He points out that people generally agree that happiness is the ultimate end they are pursuing through their deliberate acts, but he finds that while they agree in this regard, they often disagree as to the nature of happiness. And in fact, Aristotle discovers that these disagreements tend to revolve around three common views: (1). that the happy life is the life of pleasure, or sensual gratification; (2). that the happy life is the life of political action, or social gratification; and (3). that the happy life is the life of study, or intellectual gratification.

In the final book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle argues that each of the pursuits conveyed in such views plays an important role in any holistic or complete account of what is truly fulfilling of human beings. In other words, he holds that each pursuit is truly valuable, in so far as it is conducive to the realization of natural human potencies." Aristotle concludes, however, that it is the latter of the three, the life of study or intellectual gratification which is most valuable, as it fulfils
that potency which is distinctively human, our rational power, and so it is the most "human" of goods.4c

The latter line of argument suggests, of course, that while people may disagree about the nature of their ultimate good, they disagree not about what it generally involves, for they all seek what they regard as fulfilling of them, but what it involves specifically, [a point which Aristotle makes more explicitly in Book III of the Nicomachean Ethics].4d Furthermore, the argument also suggests that whatever people choose as their specific end is always something which is, in fact, in some way fulfilling of them as human, and toward which they are inclined by nature. In other words, the disagreements which people have, and the errors which they make about what is of ultimate value to them, seem to involve how exactly they specify the general goods they naturally intuit, or how they focus upon or emphasize certain of these goods at the expense or neglect of others.

It appears that no one ever regards as their end something which is not consistent, at least in part, with that toward which they are naturally inclined, or something which is, at least in itself, fulfilling of them as human.4e They may still be pursing such an end by wholly inappropriate means, ones which could never succeed in truly achieving it, and actually do the opposite. But the point is that the end per se, apart from any over-zealousness with which it is pursued, what specifically it is thought to
contain, and the means by which it is sought, still reflects something which is naturally ordained, or something consistent with what nature prescribes, and which human beings pursue of necessity: the realization of natural potencies.

Aquinas agrees with the latter points, and in Sections Four and Five, I will explain how he attempts to show that they are true. He argues explicitly that the ends toward which people are naturally inclined provide only a very general awareness in them of what these ends involve, not their specific contents: The latter, he holds, people have to work out on their own; they require demonstration and experience. Furthermore, Saint Thomas insists that whatever people will, they always will "under the aspect good," or as something they necessarily regard as consistent with an end or good they naturally intuit. This is because, as seen, he demonstrates that the naturally ordained ends are the only ends presented to practical reason; as will be explained in Section Five, people cannot ever wholly circumvent them, for they are that to which every human being's very concept of good refers. And so, according to Aquinas, whatever people understand as the specific nature of their ultimate end will reflect, at least in part, something which really is a human end.

Given the latter point, the fact that people disagree and err about what they regard as intrinsically good is perhaps not as troublesome to the Thomistic position as may have originally been
thought. Such disagreements can be explained by illustrating that people do often pursue different ends; they can misconstrue the specific contents of the general ends they naturally grasp, and they can focus upon or emphasize only part of the whole spectrum of what is good from the human standpoint. In both instances, Aquinas holds that people are still seeking *eudaimonia*, or what fulfils them *qua* human; it is just that they have determined its specific contents differently, and/or they have focused upon just a part of what will really fulfil them.

In similar fashion, the errors which people are alleged to make, or can be accused of making with regard to the ends they pursue, can be accounted for in terms of how they misconstrue the specific contents of their ends, [i.e. the specific natures of those ends to which they are inclined of necessity], or how they reject an holistic conception of what is valuable to human beings, in favour of a partial conception. In other words, people do, in fact, err, and this error lies either in their failure to apprehend the true specific contents of the ends they naturally grasp, or in the narrowness of their view of what is intrinsically valuable, and the neglect it spawns regarding other intrinsic human goods.

The Thomistic argument that people enjoy a natural awareness of what is intrinsically good does not, then, seem to be contradicted even by the existence of disagreements and errors
about what is ultimately valuable to human beings. It appears that there exists a set or range of human goods which human selection can never stray from completely, even though it may focus on just one part, or specifically misconstrue.

On the other hand, and in spite of the foregoing arguments, it still seems very odd that there should occur any disagreements and errors about basic human goods, and about the basic moral principles derived from the human inclination to pursue them, especially if it is true that human beings are naturally aware of them. There is still something bothersome about such occurrences, and this is because to this point I have explicated only the arguments in Thomistic ethics which explain how moral disagreements and errors occur, not the arguments accounting for why they do so.

Why is it that some people are inclined to certain natural ends rather than others? How can people be both naturally aware of what is intrinsically good, and also convey but a partial grasp of it? And why is it that people can arrive at very different conclusions about the specific contents of the same ends, [even, for example, when they have had similar experiences and upbringings]? The answers to these questions require that one delve even further into the details of Thomistic ethics.

Saint Thomas argues that people must have a natural awareness of basic moral principles or prescriptions, as this follows
ultimately from the teleological character of nature - ultimately human nature - the proof for the existence of which will be explained in Sections Four and Five. But he does not argue, as seen, that people are also naturally aware of that to which, specifically, these principles or prescriptions refer. Nor does he hold that people are naturally aware of any hierarchy among the goods or ends they naturally intuit, and which serve as the basis for such principles. The latter fact leads some modern Thomistic scholars to conclude that there is no hierarchy among such ends, that they are all equally prescribed. But this is not Saint Thomas' teaching.

Like Aristotle, Aquinas holds that some naturally ordained ends are more important than others because they are simply more human; i.e., they are more conducive to the fulfilment of those potencies we have qua human, and so more in keeping with that toward which the nature's teleology directs us. And so while our naturally ordained ends each have intrinsic value, they are not on equal footing. To the objection that there cannot exist degrees of worth among many things whose worth is intrinsic, I respond that the latter claim is absurd, and can be shown to be so by counterexample.

Consider, for instance, the various physical senses which people have, such as the senses of sight and smell, as well the various activities consequent upon them, such as the act of seeing
and the act of smelling; it goes without saying that all such activities have intrinsic value or worth from the human perspective, but they are not regarded as equally valuable. Indeed, while people generally desire both the ability to see and the ability to smell for their own sake, I daresay that most would likely prefer losing their sense of smell before their sense of sight. The ability to see is valued more highly than the sense of smell, and higher perhaps than all of the other senses, in spite of the fact that they are all perceived as intrinsically valuable.

And so it seems that there can be degrees of goodness among things which are all intrinsically good or valuable. Indeed, just because two things are thought to have value or worth in and of themselves, and not in terms of something outside them to which they are thought to be causally connected, does not mean that one of the two cannot be worth more than the other. To cite a further example, I can engage in playing golf for its own sake; and I can read Aristotle's *Physics* for its own sake, but that does not mean that they are equally valuable to me. I may find the latter activity more rewarding, and so value it more highly than the former. But this is to subscribe to a subjective measure of what is valuable. Saint Thomas, of course, holds that there is an objective measure, apart from particular likes and dislikes, for what is more valuable or good among those things which I, and which all human beings naturally regard as valuable or good.
As will be shown in Sections Four and Five, Aquinas discovers this objective measure in the same place in which he discovers: (a). that there is objective prescriptiveness or normativity implicit in the teleological character of all natural processes; and (b). that there is a natural awareness in human beings of basic moral principles arising from the natural process of practical reasoning which governs moral behaviour. In other words, he discovers this objective measure in his natural theology and metaphysics. Aquinas reasons, not unlike Aristotle, that if it is true that all natural substances are directed or oriented to the complete realization of the potencies they bear as substances of a specific kind, [i.e., to the full realization of their specific natures]; and if, in fact, the various kinds of natural substances are ultimately distinguished by specific differentia, or the natural potencies specific to them, then it follows that the full realization of precisely such potencies is going to have greater importance relative to the natural end of these substances than any of their other natural powers or inclinations."

And so if, for example, porcupines, which are natural substances, [assuming these exist],\(^1\) are directed to the fulfilment of their natures as porcupines, then it is going to be those natural potencies which they bear precisely as porcupines which are central to this fulfilment, and so it will be precisely such potencies which are of utmost importance to their natural
aim, [again, assuming the existence of such potencies, and the natural directive to fulfill them]. Similarly, if human beings are directed to the fulfillment of their natures as human, then the realization of the natural potencies they bear qua human are more important to this end than the realization of those they bear qua animal, or qua organic substance, or qua natural substance etc.. The latter potencies are important; they supply support to the former, but they are not as important as it.

Needless to say, the foregoing conclusion is simply a logical consequence of what Saint Thomas discovers about the teleological character of nature in his natural theology and metaphysics: as will be shown in succeeding sections, this is the discovery that natural substances exist and are, in fact, oriented toward the full actualization of the natural potencies they bear as substances of a specific kind. Aquinas sees that a hierarchy among the naturally ordained ends which people pursue is implied by this fact. The hierarchy is based upon the distinction between those natural human potencies which are derived directly from the specific differentia of human nature, and those potencies which are not directly derived from this differentia. The latter are placed higher on the hierarchy, since it is their full realization which, as it were, comprises the specific differentia of the nature of the human telos or end qua human, or as distinct from the ends of other natural substances.
There is, then, a hierarchy among those ends or goods of which human beings enjoy a natural awareness, and which serve as the basis of the moral principles they naturally intuit. But to return to the present point, according to Aquinas, there is not a natural awareness in people of this hierarchy; like the specific contents of their naturally ordained ends, it is something requiring demonstration and experience. And this point, in addition to a second, can be of great assistance in explaining why people often disagree and err about which human values are most important, what these values specifically involve, or to which they give priority in their own lives. The second point which is of assistance in this regard involves how, in the view of both Aristotle and Aquinas, the amount of value or fulfilment which people formally perceive in any naturally ordained end, or in the means to it, [in addition to whatever specific contents they assign to it], depends to a very large extent upon their state of character, or how they are disposed to act through habituation.

In Book 10 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle draws an analogy between a person's moral state and a person's physical state. He says that just as a state of poor physical health can skew a person's sense-perceptions whereby, for instance, to a person with a fever what is "sweet" will taste "bitter", a poor state of moral 'health' can undermine a person's sense of value. The result is that such a person will find fulfilling, or regard
as pleasant or desirable, what is, [in the manner in which it is actually pursued, or in how it is specifically construed], actually something less fulfilling, or even something harmful and undesirable from the standpoint of what is naturally ordained.

A person's moral state is defined by Aristotle as their state of moral virtue, and moral virtue is defined by him as a habit or disposition whereby a person formally understands, chooses, and enjoys that which is morally righteous or good, i.e. that which is conducive to the natural human end. Furthermore, Aristotle argues that such a habit requires considerable time and effort to develop; it is not something with which people are born, and it is always something which can change throughout their lives.

Of course, what cannot change, and what people are born with, says Aristotle, is their desire for "happiness", or the full actualization of their natural potencies. As stated, Aquinas argues that this desire is manifest in people as a natural orientation toward and awareness of what, in general, has intrinsic value or goodness, [i.e. desirability], from the human perspective, or what, in fact, will realize their natural potencies. But Aquinas also holds that a person's formal awareness of, or conscious disposition toward what is intrinsically good is completely up to that person. This disposition affects how the person regards what is intrinsically good, i.e., how the person pursues it, of what it is thought to
consist, and what priority it is given etc. The virtuous person, or the one with the virtuous disposition, pursues naturally ordained human ends, and the means to them "in the right way, at the right time, and in the right measure". In other words, this person assigns the objective priority to such ends; he pursues them by means which will actually achieve them, and which respect and reflect their respective importance; and he will understand that in which truly they all specifically consist.

Aquinas concurs with Aristotle regarding the doctrine of the mean, or the view that moral virtue generally corresponds to a mean between two extremes, one involving deficiency in action, and the other excessiveness in action. According to this doctrine, people usually err in morality by assigning either too much or too little value or worth to the ends or goods they pursue, and this error subsequently causes them to misconstrue the specific natures of those ends or goods.

For example, the coward tends to assign too much value to the good of self-preservation, and thus fears that which is not fearsome, or fears too much, or at the wrong time and place, that which truly is fearsome. Consequently, he also misunderstands what the specific requirements or contents of self-preservation involve. The same is true of the rash person who, at the other extreme, assigns too little value to the good of self-preservation, and hence, fears too little that which is a threat
to this end. Finally, in contrast to both cowardice and rashness, the courageous person is aware of the true value and the true requirements or contents of self-preservation, and pursues it in the manner befitting this value, and reflecting such contents, living a life of neither irrational fear, nor irrational temerity."

Such an awareness, to reiterate, is not natural according to Aquinas, unlike that awareness of goodness which arises from the inclination to self-preservation itself, or from the other ends or goods which people naturally pursue. Rather, the awareness of how much value or worth such goods have, [apart from the simple fact that they have value, or that they are ends], both in themselves, and relative to each other, as well as their specific contents, is a matter for rational determination. And both the conduct and conclusion of this rational determination can be either undermined or supported by a person's habits or dispositions.

In other words, the awareness that self-preservation or friendship, or procreation, or knowledge etc., are all intrinsically good or fulfilling comes naturally or intuitively to human beings. But the awareness of how good they are, what priority they each warrant, and what exactly they involve, is something about which people must formally deliberate, and upon which the habitual tendencies they develop will have an enormous impact. For example, a highly intemperate person, or someone who,
over a significant period of time has given more priority to the pursuit of sensual pleasure than to anything else, will generally find it difficult to be satisfied with less pleasure than that to which he is accustomed, or to fathom the possibility that sensual pleasure actually has less intrinsic desirability relative to other human ends than the amount he assigns to it.

Plato argues in the *Republic* that it is only the person with a formal experience of the whole range of human goods who is qualified to judge which is of greater or lesser worth. Aquinas agrees in part with this assessment, holding that an holistic account of what constitutes human fulfilment is the key to finding an objective measure for what is most valuable to human beings. And as I shall convey in Sections Four and Five, he finds this holistic account, and the objective measure of moral value it implies, in his natural theology and metaphysics.

But the force of habit can undermine a person's ability to consider the human end as a whole, and to be objective in his rational estimation of which human goods deserve greater emphasis. The result is that people will disagree and err about which human ends are more important and in what exactly they consist; people will focus on just a part of the set of human goods, and misconstrue even what is involved in this part. And this occurs in spite of the fact that they should all be naturally aware of what has intrinsic value or goodness to them.
Of course, such occurrences came as little surprise to both Aquinas and Aristotle. Both argued that the majority of human beings lack virtuous states of character, [and, for that matter, that the majority also lack vicious states of character]. Rather, they held that most people fall into the states of "continence" or "incontinence", being at odds even within themselves, let alone with others, about what is good in their lives.

It seems, then, that when further details of his position are taken into account, the existence of moral disparity and error in no way contradicts the non-naturalism conveyed in Saint Thomas' moral philosophy. In this regard, the view that people intuit only natural human ends, and not the means to them must be considered first. Following this, one must contemplate the lack of specificity in the goods people are said to intuit, and the argument that they are not naturally aware of the objective hierarchy among these goods. Finally, one must weigh how a person's moral dispositions or habits cannot only influence what they regard as most good, but also how they specifically construe human goods overall, by directly affecting their rational assent to an objective measure of goodness. All of these factors explain how it is possible for there to exist moral disagreements and errors among people, even though they all enjoy a natural awareness of the same basic moral precepts, and are directed by nature to the same ends.
It is important to point out, of course, that such a defense of the non-naturalism of Thomistic ethics is ultimately derived from his naturalism. As seen, the disagreements and errors which people make about morality cannot, in Saint Thomas' view, be sufficiently explained outside of a naturalistic approach to ethics. It is via such an approach, for example, that human beings can discover the correct means to natural human ends, what the specific contents of these ends involve, and how there exists an objective measure of goodness to which they can subscribe. What the latter point suggests is that moral disagreements and errors cannot be settled or corrected solely with reference to the goods people intuit, and the moral principles derived from them, for these are at best only a very general guide to morality. And so the non-naturalism of Thomistic ethics does not stand alone, but alongside and in dependence upon its naturalism.

Conversely, Aquinas' naturalism receives support from his non-naturalism. As seen, it is precisely the view that there is normativity or prescriptivness implicit in all natural processes, the backbone of his non-naturalism, which also allows Saint Thomas to circumvent the naturalistic fallacy when he argues that natural philosophy, psychology, natural theology, and metaphysics provide an objective foundation for normative ethics.

Overall, it seems that the naturalistic and non-naturalistic dimensions of Thomistic ethics are interdependent and correlated.
This is perhaps because they arise from the same arguments: those which show that nature is teleological, and what goal, specifically, it is directed toward. But the latter point also implies that the naturalism of Thomistic ethics is more fundamental to that theory than his non-naturalism. I have provided but a very general sketch of this naturalism in the present section; but clearly much more needs to be said, for it seems that Thomistic ethics either stands or falls depending upon its validity.

Section Five of this discussion is therefore devoted to a complete explication and analysis of such an approach. But having conveyed how there seems to exist both naturalism and non-naturalism in Saint Thomas' moral theory, what in general the two approaches involve, and how they are inter-connected, it is now possible to examine some specific modern interpretations of that philosophy. It now can be shown how some of these interpretations err not only in trying to reduce Thomistic ethics to only one or the other of its two dimensions, but how in the process they also tend to misconstrue whichever dimension they focus upon, and ultimately misrepresent Saint Thomas' overall argument for the legitimacy of moral science.

* * * * * * * * *
SECTION FOUR: SPECIFIC INSIGHTS AND SPECIFIC ERRORS

(A). Naturalists: Kretzmann and Stump.

Among those modern interpretations of Thomistic ethics which favor its naturalistic dimension, none is perhaps more intriguing and influential than that of Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann. The latter philosophers focus upon the Thomistic arguments for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness, arguments supporting the view that being and goodness are only conceptually distinct, that they are, as Aquinas states, "really the same, differing only in idea".¹

On the basis of these arguments, Stump and Kretzmann draw a conclusion which is generally consistent with St. Thomas' notion, as conveyed in Section Three, that the primary sense of goodness relative to natural substances is the full actualization of natural potencies. They argue that since being and goodness are co-extensive, it follows both that a human being is good qua human to the extent that he or she actualizes those potencies specific to human nature, [i.e. to the extent that he or she fully realizes what it means to be human], and that human actions are good to the extent that they are conducive to this actualization of natural human potencies, [i.e. to the extent that they maintain or promote the full realization of what it means to be human].
Stump and Kretzmann are correct, I will argue, in observing that this is in fact St. Thomas' position regarding the nature of goodness relative to human beings and human actions. However, I will also argue that despite this observation, their interpretation of both St. Thomas' meta-ethics and ethics are fraught with some apparent errors, three of which are quite serious. First and foremost, they seem to provide but a superficial and truncated account of his meta-ethical theory, neglecting precisely its arguments supporting the objectivity of ethics. Secondly, they seem to misinterpret at least part of those Thomistic arguments which they do not neglect. Finally, and most importantly, they appear to misrepresent St. Thomas' moral philosophy in such a way that his arguments appear circular. To understand how they err in these three ways, and what specifically these errors involve, it is necessary to begin with an explication of that Thomistic argument upon which much of their interpretation is based.

* * * *

In ST. I. 5. 1., Aquinas provides his most famous argument for the interchangeability of being and goodness, and it is upon Stump and Kretzmann's interpretation of this argument that I will focus most of my analysis. The argument is deductive in form, and reads as follows:

-127-
The essence of goodness consists in this, that it is in some way desirable. Hence the Philosopher says: *Goodness is what all desire.* Now it is clear that a thing is desirable insofar as it is perfect; for all desire their own perfection. But everything is perfect so far as it is actual. Therefore, it is clear that a thing is perfect so far as it exists; for it is existence that makes all things actual...Hence it is clear that goodness and being are the same really. But goodness presents the aspect of desirableness, which being does not present.

Syllogistically, such an argument can be rendered thus:

1. The good is what all desire.
2. What all desire is the perfect.
3. Therefore, the good is the perfect.
4. The perfect is what is actual.
5. What is actual is being.
6. Therefore, the perfect is being.
7. Therefore, the good is being; (i.e., Being and goodness are the same in reference: they both refer to that which is perfect/actual).

The argument is clearly valid. The question, of course, is whether such an argument is sound. Regarding its soundness, I would like to suggest at the outset that the most critical premises are numbers 2 and 4, and that Kretzmann and Stump seem to partly misconstrue at least the significance of premise 2. Aquinas seems to consider premises 1 and 5 as self-evident. This is most easily seen in the case of premise 5. For Aquinas, to say that something is actual is to say that it exists and vice-versa; something exists to the extent that it is in act. Hence, the negation of the premise would clearly result in a contradiction.
But that a contradiction would result from the negation of premise 1 is less clear. Indeed, as stated in Section Two, that the good is "not what all desire" seems quite possible, since what all desire may, in fact, be bad. And yet this is, I think, to misconstrue exactly what St. Thomas has in mind when he equates the good with "what all desire". Simply put, he is referring to what can be termed the "generic" sense or meaning of goodness. As indicated by Aquinas himself, the equation which he makes is Aristotelian in origin, and is derived from a more fundamental Aristotelian point, as discussed previously, that what is good has the nature of a telos, an end or final cause.

As Aristotle states in the *Metaphysics*, an end or final cause is, from the standpoint of that which is oriented toward it, "an object of desire". To say, then, that the good is "what all desire" is simply to say that the good, in its most generic sense as an end or final cause, has the quality of always being, by definition, an object of desire. Understood in this way, Aquinas' statement that the good is what all desire is analytically or self-evidently true. If a good is, by definition, an end, [i.e. something to be brought about, or something to be pursued], and an end is an object of desire to those oriented or directed toward it, then a good is an object of desire.

The latter point should not be construed, of course, as signifying that whatever people regard as good or as an object of desire, really is good, or really is desirable, except in the
generic sense of goodness. Again, Aquinas states that whatever people pursue or will, they pursue "under the aspect of good". In one respect, this simply means that whatever they pursue, they implicitly regard as an end, or as an object of desire. This is, to reiterate, the generic sense of goodness. And needless to say, whatever people perceive as good really is good in this generic sense; it really is an end or object of desire to them.

But apart from its generic sense, Aquinas holds that there is also, as seen, a specific sense of goodness. The good, in its specific sense, [relative to natural substances], refers primarily to what fulfills a natural substance as a substance of a specific kind, i.e., what would realize its natural potencies. Secondarily, it refers to what, in itself, is causally related to the realization of natural potencies, e.g. the genuine means to their realization through deliberate action.

As stated previously, when St. Thomas says that whatever people pursue they pursue "under the aspect of good", he also means that they pursue what they regard as fulfilling of them, or as conducive to their fulfilment. In other words, people pursue whatever they pursue not only under the aspect of the generic sense of goodness, [i.e. as an end, final cause or object of desire], but under the aspect of the specific sense of goodness, [i.e. as what will realize their natural potencies or as what will fulfill them qua human]. It is in the latter regard that people can err about what is good. In other words, it is with regard to the specific sense of goodness that they can pursue as good what
really is not good, what really does not fulfill them. And this occurs even though whatever people pursue will always be good in the generic sense, as an object of desire or end.

Indeed as soon as anything is pursued, it immediately fulfills the criteria establishing the generic sense of goodness: it is an end, and hence, an object of desire. But the point is that an object of desire does not necessarily fulfill the criteria establishing the specific sense of goodness: what is desired may not realize natural human potencies. And it also may it be conducive to such realization. Consequently, what is perceived as good, or what appears good, may actually be bad. This consequence is based upon the distinction between the generic sense of goodness, which simply involves the notion that the good is an end or object of desire, and the specific sense of goodness which, as it were, specifies exactly what the end of natural substances is; what is truly desirable to them. Again, anything can be good in the generic sense, but what is good in the generic sense may not be good in the specific sense.

Throughout the history of philosophy, ethicists have often overlooked the latter distinction, with dire results. For example, in Section Two, I discussed the argument of J. S. Mill, which involves the view that pleasure is "what all desire", and therefore, that it is desirable or good, i.e. that it ought to be desired. Mill's position is obviously based upon the Thomistic and Aristotelian maxim that the good is what all desire. But as
seen, this merely describes the generic sense of goodness, and Mill errs in assuming that it implies the specific sense. Mill reasons that if the good is "what all desire", and pleasure fulfills this criterion, then pleasure is good. He is right - but only with regard to the generic sense of goodness. He fails to make the distinction between this sense of goodness and the more specific sense; in fact, he conflates them.

While it is true that, as an object of desire, pleasure is good in the generic sense, this does not imply that it is good in the specific sense also: i.e. that it ought to be desired. As stated previously, St. Thomas holds that only what fulfills natural potencies or is conducive to their fulfilment "ought to be desired", as these are implicitly prescribed by natural processes and the teleological character of nature. The point, again, is that not everything which people desire is something they ought to desire. The generic sense of goodness must be clearly distinguished from the specific sense; J. S. Mill, an advocate of naturalism in ethics, fails to make this distinction.

In similar fashion, G.E. Moore, whom I formerly characterized as a proponent of non-naturalism in ethics, also fails fully to gauge such a distinction. In Section Two, I described Moore's famous "open question critique" of naturalism, in which he argues that whenever goodness is reduced to some natural property, such as the "useful" or the "desirable", it always seems reasonable to ask whether something with such a property really is good, whether or why it really ought to be pursued. And this indicates,
according to Moore, that goodness really is not reducible to such a property.

In reply to Moore, it now seems clear that the reasonableness of such a question stems from the distinction between the generic sense of goodness and its specific sense. Given the fact that the generic sense of goodness does not imply the specific sense, it goes without saying that it is always reasonable to ask whether that which is good in the generic sense, [any or even all particular objects of actual human pursuit], are also good in the specific sense, [i.e. are consistent with nature's prescription for the realization of natural potencies. Hence, when one defines goodness merely with reference to its generic sense, and posits as the good some particular object of human pursuit - e.g. pleasure, or utility, or even the desirable in general - it is, to use Moore's terminology, always an open question as to whether such an object really is good.

But Moore, of course, failed to conceive formally of the distinction between the generic and specific senses of goodness. And the result is that his open question critique led him to conclude that goodness does not seem to be implied by any natural property or particular object of human desire or pursuit. Indeed, he ultimately concluded that goodness itself is indefinable in natural terms, that it cannot be reduced to some natural property, or object of human desire.

In drawing this conclusion, and indeed, in formulating the open question critique at all, Moore was at least avoiding the
mistake of Mill; the former realized that goodness signifies more than any particular object of human pursuit or desire. But he was unable to isolate this meaning; and he concluded, therefore, that it cannot be isolated. Moore was aware that goodness has a prescriptive quality to it, an implicit *oughtness*, and he was at a loss to find any natural property with this quality: it was, he felt, *non-natural*, something which human beings add to the natural, or intuit alongside it.

In contrast, Aquinas recognizes, on the basis of discoveries he makes in his natural theology, metaphysics, and natural philosophy, that there does exist a natural property which has a prescriptive quality to it because nature itself is teleological. He recognizes that all natural potencies are directed to their full actualization, to completion. This completion or actualization of natural potencies is, then, a natural prescription within the potency itself: the potency is, as it were, in a state of privation relative to its realization. The latter is something the potency is directed toward, which it lacks but ought to have. The realization of natural potencies is thus a natural property encompassing the specific sense of goodness, [again, relative to natural substances]; it is that for which human beings pursue all particular objects of desire, such as pleasure or utility.

Stump and Kretzmann are correct in acknowledging that this is St. Thomas' position regarding the nature of goodness; they appear to be incorrect, I contend, in claiming that his arguments for the
co-extensiveness of being and goodness suffice to ground or establish this position. Ultimately, I will show that such arguments depend for their soundness upon subordinate arguments from St. Thomas' natural theology and metaphysics, and consequently, that they presuppose Aquinas' stance regarding the specific sense of goodness. To prove my point, it is necessary to return to my explication and analysis of that Thomistic argument upon which Kretzmann and Stump focus most of their efforts.

To this point, I have shown that premises 1 and 5 from the syllogistic rendering of the argument in ST. I. 5. 1. are self-evidently true. Premise 5, that "the actual is being" was shown to be true by simply pointing out that "to be", or "to exist" means "to be in act". Proving that premise 1, "the good is what all desire" is analytically true was somewhat more complex; it involved first elucidating the generic sense of goodness as an end or final cause, and from there, pointing out how the good in this generic sense is implicitly "an object of desire" to whomever or whatever is directed toward it. Now before proceeding further, and examining the truth of what I have termed the critical premises in the argument in ST. I. 5. 1., namely, premises 2 and 4, it is important to point out the significance of the method used to determine the truth-value of premise 1.

St. Thomas argues that self-evident propositions are divisible into two kinds: those that are self-evident in themselves and to us, and those that are self-evident in themselves and not to us. What he means is straightforward. A
proposition is self-evident, he says, if its predicate forms part of the concept of it subject.\textsuperscript{11} What this suggests is that to determine whether a proposition is self-evident, one must know the meanings of its terms. In particular, one must know what the subject term signifies in order to establish whether the predicate term forms part of this meaning. Aquinas says that the meaning of the subject term in the case of some self-evident propositions is fairly obvious, or at least easy to understand. These are the propositions which he classifies under the heading "self-evident in themselves and to us", \textit{[per se nota quoad nos]}. An example of this kind of proposition is "the whole is greater than its part".

However according to Aquinas, there are also some self-evident propositions in which the meaning of the subject term is far less easy to understand. Aquinas argues that in order to determine that such a proposition is self-evidently true, one must first provide an often complex demonstration establishing the exact meaning of the subject term. Only then, he says, can these propositions be shown to the analytically true. Consequently, St. Thomas refers to them simply as "self-evident in themselves", \textit{[and not to us]}, \textit{[per se nota]}.

Premise 1 of the argument in ST. I. 5. 1. is precisely such a proposition. Unless one has a clear understanding of the generic sense of goodness, and its distinction from the specific sense, premise 1 simply does not appear to be self-evident. Such a premise is \textit{per se nota}, but not \textit{per se nota quoad nos}: what

-136-
exactly is meant by the subject term is not obvious but requires a demonstration. It seems to me that the same can be said of premises 2 and 4 of the argument: respectively, that "what all desire is the perfect", and that "the perfect is what is actual".

I have already stated that I regard these premises as most critical to the success of the entire argument. This is because it is really these premises which supply the middle term through which Aquinas is able to demonstrate that being and goodness are the same in reference. This middle term is expressed in premises 3 and 6: respectively, "the good is the perfect" and "the perfect is being". It is St. Thomas' concept of the "perfect" which in premise 2 he links to his concept of goodness, and in premise 3 to his concept of being. It appears to me that St. Thomas' position is that these premises are not unlike premise 1: they are self-evident in themselves, but not to us, because the exact meaning of their terms require demonstrations.

For instance, premise 4 proposes that "the perfect is the actual". To determine that this proposition is self-evident, one must understand what Aquinas signifies by "the perfect". In fact, I have already touched upon his meaning in my analysis of premise 1, when I pointed out that from his metaphysics, natural theology and natural philosophy Aquinas discovers that whatever is in a state of potency is directed or inclined toward its full actualization or completion. Of course, another way of stating the same principle is that whatever is in a state of potency is
directed to its own perfection. This is because, as already said, insofar as it is directed to its actuality, the potency can be understood as being in a state of privation relative to this actuality. In other words, it is in a state of incompleteness or imperfection: it lacks that which it is directed toward. Hence, that toward which a potency is directed, its own actuality, can be understood as the perfection of that potency. And it is, then, in this sense that "the perfect" is the actual. What is "perfect" is a potency brought to completion, and a potency brought to completion is an actuality.

Needless to say, the latter point shows that the truth of premise 4 depends upon subordinate arguments in St. Thomas' metaphysics, natural theology and natural philosophy, in which he demonstrates that whatever is in potency is directed or driven to actuality. These arguments show that a potency can be understood as being in a state of incompleteness or imperfection relative to its reduction to actuality, so that the latter represents a state of perfection relative to the potency directed toward it.

I will, as stated previously, explicate and examine such arguments in Section Five. The present point is simply that if the truth of premise 4 in the argument from ST. I. 5. 1. for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness is supported by subordinate arguments in Aquinas' metaphysics, natural theology and philosophy of nature, then the soundness of the former depends upon the soundness of the latter. And this means that the argument in ST.
I. 5. 1. does not, by itself, suffice to prove that being and goodness are co-extensive, and more importantly that, contrary to Stump and Kretzmann, the argument presupposes, [via a subordinate argument supporting one of its premises], that the good of every natural substance, [including human beings], involves the full actualization of natural potencies as substances of a specific kind. An examination of premise 2 from such an argument, [which I have also said that I believe Stump and Kretzmann to partly misconstrue], will make the latter point even more obvious.

As seen, premise 2 states that "what all desire is the perfect". Stump and Kretzmann interpret this statement as meaning that insofar as something is an object of desire, it is desired in accordance with how "perfect" it is in its kind. In their essay, "Being and Goodness", they state:

If a thing is desirable as a thing of a specific kind, it is desirable to the extent to which it is perfect of that kind...a whole complete specimen, free from relevant defect.'

In other words, Stump and Kretzmann think that in premise 2, Aquinas is saying that since any object of desire is some specific kind of object, [assuming that objects are divisible into different kinds], it follows that such an object is desirable to the degree that it actually fulfills or bears the characteristics of that kind of object: i.e. to the extent that it is "perfect in
its kind". It is easy to understand what they mean by way of an example.

Let us say that someone may enjoy eating chocolate cake, and consequently desires a piece of chocolate cake. Apparently, what this person desires is something which actually realizes the characteristics appropriate to a piece of chocolate cake: i.e. something edible, which looks and tastes like chocolate cake. Whatever piece of cake the person encounters is desirable to the extent that it bears these characteristics, and undesirable to the extent that it does not bear them. For instance, if it is stale, or covered with mold, etc., one would imagine that the person would hardly desire it: it is desirable to the extent that it is perfect in its kind.

And thus, Stump and Kretzmann interpret Aquinas' statement that "what all desire is the perfect" as meaning that every object of desire is some particular kind of object, and is desired to the extent that it is complete or perfect as an object of that kind. Such an interpretation, while intriguing, seems to grasp only the lesser part of Aquinas' meaning. For it appears from the text of ST. I. 5. 1. that Aquinas means something far more in premise 2 than what Kretzmann and Stump take him to mean. Indeed, Aquinas himself points to the full meaning of that proposition when immediately following it he offers in its support the statement: "For all desire their own perfection". In other words, St. Thomas
is arguing that since all desire their own perfection, it follows that "what all desire is the perfect".\[^{16}\]

What such an argument suggests, of course, is that contrary to the view of Kretzmann and Stump, Aquinas does not hold that "what all desire is the perfect" simply because "any object is desirable to the extent that it is perfect in its kind". Rather, he holds that what all desire is the perfect, because to be perfect in one's own kind is ultimately desirable to all, i.e. to be a complete specimen in one's own right, or free from relevant defect as a natural substance of a specific kind. In other words, Aquinas feels that because all strive to be perfect in themselves, they find desirable objects to the extent that they are perfect in their kind, objects which are not defective, and which people perceive as a means to their own perfection.\[^{17}\]

To continue with the example given above, Aquinas would have us ask why it is that a person who desires a piece of chocolate should desire one which is perfect, which fully realizes the nature of a piece of chocolate cake? The answer he offers is that it is because such a person desires his own perfection, [i.e. that like all natural substances, he is naturally inclined to completion, to realize the potencies specific to his nature]. Consequently, whatever this person perceives as a means to such an end, [in this case, consuming a piece of chocolate cake], he will naturally desire as a complete or perfect means, [i.e. as a fully actualized means].
In other words, Aquinas' argument relating to premise 2 is simply that since the natural goal of all is perfection, [fully realized natural potencies], all naturally desire perfect means to this goal; they desire those objects [or actions] which do not lack any property consistent with the nature of the objects [or actions] perceived to be a means to the goal of perfection. Thus, according to Aquinas, the ultimate reason for why it is true that "what all desire is the perfect" is, as he says, the fact that "all desire their own perfection"; this is the basis of premise 2. And needless to say, it involves what I have formerly referred to as his stance regarding the specific sense of goodness.

To reiterate, the generic sense of goodness simply expresses that the good is an end, a final cause or object of desire. On the other hand, the specific sense of goodness expresses what exactly the end of natural substances constitutes: the full actualization of natural potencies, perfection or completion. As already seen in the analysis of premise 4, Aquinas holds that the actualization of a potency can be construed as the completion or perfection of that potency: it gains in actualization what it ought to have or be, i.e. what it is directed toward. This means that the actualization of the specific potencies of a natural substance can be construed as the completion or perfection of that substance. And given that natural substances are oriented toward the actualization of their potencies, it follows that they are oriented toward their own perfection or completion.
And so it is that Aquinas proposes that "what all desire is the perfect", and he regards this proposition as per se nota, [although not per se nota quoad nos]. The predicate term, "perfect", forms part of the concept of the subject term, "what all desire". But this is not obvious; it requires a rather complex demonstration elucidating the meaning of the subject term, whereby it is shown that it includes the predicate term. The demonstration revolves around the following question: "What does what all desire signify?". The answer is that it signifies "the perfect", and this can be discerned through the following line of reasoning.

From premise 1 it was shown that "what all desire" is the "good". In this sense, the good is simply an end or final cause. So what all desire is an end or final cause. But what end or final cause? Again, from his metaphysics, natural theology and natural philosophy, Aquinas discovers that nature is teleological, and that the end of all natural substances is the actualization of the potencies they bear as substances of a specific kind. But the realization of any potency, insofar as the potency is directed toward realization, [and so in privation relative to its realization], can be construed as the perfection of that potency. And thus, Aquinas concludes that what all are oriented toward - i.e. what all desire - is the perfect.

Syllogistically, the latter demonstration can be rendered thus:
1. What all desire is the good.
2. The good is an end.
3. The end of all is the realization of natural potencies.
4. The realization of natural potencies is the perfection of those potencies.
5. Therefore, what all desire is the perfection of natural potencies [the perfect].

As said, premises 3 and 4 of this argument are derived from St. Thomas' metaphysics, natural theology and natural philosophy: it is here that he discovers the principles which entail the truth of such premises. And given that the truth of premise 2 in the argument in ST. I. 5. 1. depends upon the truth of precisely these premises, it follows that the former argument itself depends upon their truth, and the metaphysical arguments supporting them.

Stump and Kretzmann appear wholly to overlook the latter fact. They appear to treat the argument in ST. I. 5. 1. as a self-contained and self-sufficient expression of St. Thomas' meta-ethical theory. They cannot explain, nor do they even consider how such an argument is in fact derived from and supported by a slew of arguments from St. Thomas' metaphysics, natural theology and natural philosophy.

More specifically, while Stump and Kretzmann are certainly aware that St. Thomas holds that whatever is in potency is oriented toward actualization, i.e. that all things aim at fully actualizing the potencies specific to their nature, as it is this position which is implicit in both premises 2 and 4 of the argument from ST. I. 5. 1., they do not explain why he takes such
a stance. Why do all things aim at being? Are all natural potencies, in fact, oriented toward actualization? And if so why? Why can they be construed as in privation relative to their actualization? Why does it make sense to say that an unrealized natural substance is incomplete or imperfect?

St. Thomas answers these questions when in his natural theology and metaphysics he demonstrates how nature is teleological, and what exactly it is oriented toward. In other words, there is a more basic meta-ethical theory underlying St. Thomas' position concerning the co-extensiveness of being and goodness. Stump and Kretzmann do not explore the foundation for St. Thomas' view in this regard, and consequently, they appear to leave this view unfounded.

The latter is the case not only with regard to the explication of the argument in ST. I. 5. 1., [which, as seen, they also seem to partly misinterpret], but with regard to other Thomistic arguments for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness which they cite. Each of these arguments includes as critical premises the proposition that all natural substances aim at being - i.e. at the full actualization of natural potencies - and so each of these arguments presupposes the arguments in St. Thomas metaphysics, natural theology and natural philosophy which prove that all natural substances do, in fact, behave in this way, and explain why they do so.

The latter point raises an even more serious apparent deficiency in Kretzmann and Stumps' interpretation of St. Thomas'
arguments for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness. If it is true that such arguments include as critical premises that all natural substances are oriented toward the realization of their natural potencies, that the substances are incomplete or imperfect in the absence of such realization, it certainly appears circular for Kretzmann and Stump to conclude from these arguments precisely the same point: that substances are oriented toward the realization of their specific potencies, incomplete or imperfect in the absence of such realization! And yet this is exactly what they do conclude:

Being and goodness are the same in reference... Therefore... a thing is good of its kind [or perfect] to the extent to which its specifying potentiality is actualized, and bad of its kind [imperfect] to the extent to which its specifying potentiality remains unactualized."

In drawing this conclusion, Kretzmann and Stump convey that they have, it would seem, misunderstood, and thus misrepresented the logic of St. Thomas' arguments for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness, and indeed, of his whole meta-ethic.

St. Thomas does not reason, as Stump and Kretzmann appear to think, that since being and goodness are co-extensive, it therefore follows that a thing's good or perfection lies in the extent to which it fully actualizes the potencies specific to its kind. Rather, Aquinas reasons in the reverse: that since the thing's good or perfection lies in the extent to which it fully
actualizes the potencies specific to its kind, it therefore follows that being and goodness are co-extensive.

The mistake of Kretzmann and Stump is, however, understandable, for it is easy to see how St. Thomas' actual arguments, when considered only in their most general structure and apart from specifics, appear to support the interpretation they offer. Very generally speaking, Aquinas' arguments appear to state the following:

1. The good is what all desire.
2. Being is what all desire.
3. Therefore, being and goodness are the same in reference.

If this is all, in fact, that Aquinas' arguments actually state, then Stump and Kretzmann are not arguing in a circle when they add to this argument the additional conclusion: therefore, the good of a natural substance lies in the extent to which it is in being [the extent to which it realizes its specific potencies]. But a more delineated account of the structure of St. Thomas' arguments for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness shows that what Stump and Kretzmann conclude from the arguments is actually one of the premises in them. In their more delineated form, the latter arguments actually state:

1. The good is what all desire [as the good is an end or object of desire].
2. What all desire is the perfect [the actualization of what is in potency, as what is in potency is directed to
3. Therefore, the good is the perfect [the actualization of what is in potency].
4. The perfect is the actual [again, as a potency is imperfect relative to its actuality].
5. The actual is being ["to be" is "to be in act"].
6. Therefore, the perfect is being [being or actuality is the perfection of a potency].
7. Therefore, the good is being [i.e. the actualization of potencies - the perfect - is that to which both being and goodness refer].

It is to this argument that Kretzmann and Stump add, as an additional conclusion: "therefore, the good of a natural substance lies in the extent to which it is in being, i.e. the extent to which its specific potencies are realized". But this is redundant: it is synonymous with premise 3, and so renders Stump and Kretzmann's position circular, and points out that they seem to have misunderstood the aim or purpose of Aquinas' arguments for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness.

The latter arguments are not intended to show that the primary sense of goodness relative to natural substances is the full actualization of natural potencies. Rather, they are intended to show that because the primary sense of goodness relative to natural substances is the full actualization of natural potencies, being and goodness are co-extensive. In other words, such arguments represent the culmination of St. Thomas' meta-ethic, not its essence: they do not prove that goodness refers to the actualization of the specific potencies of natural substances, but prove that given that this is indeed the case, being and goodness
are the same in reference.

As a result, to prove that the goodness of natural substances refers to the actualization of specific potencies, one must look beyond St. Thomas' arguments for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness, and focus upon what underlies these: his metaphysical and theological arguments entailing that nature is teleological. Stump and Kretzmann do not appear to do this, and in the process they misrepresent both Aquinas' meta-ethic, as well as his naturalistic argument for the objectivity of ethics. And it is for this reason that I fault them.

*   *   *   *   *

[B]. A Non-naturalist: Germain Grisez

Given that it advances a theory of natural law, it is no wonder that the moral philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas is normally classified by modern ethicists as espousing a purely naturalistic approach to resolving the problem of ethical objectivity. Thomistic ethics is usually interpreted as arguing that moral principles are discoverable in nature; Aquinas is seen as somehow establishing these principles from his philosophical psychology, his philosophy of nature, and ultimately his metaphysics and natural theology. Indeed, I have argued that St. Thomas does, in fact, determine moral principles in this way; but I have also argued that modern interpretations of his naturalism are generally deficient. As in the case of Kretzmann and Stump, such
interpretations often misapprehend both the structure and depth of Aquinas' naturalistic arguments, and consequently misrepresent their true nature. What is more, most modern interpreters tend to concentrate solely upon the naturalism of Aquinas, convinced that it comprises the whole of his moral theory.

The latter point raises the issue of those modern interpretations of Thomistic ethics which stray from the norm. One of the most important contributions to the modern understanding of Aquinas' moral philosophy has been the rediscovery of its non-naturalistic dimension: St. Thomas' argument that human beings have a natural or intuitive awareness of both the general nature of goodness, as well as the basic normative principles derived from it. This discovery has, of course, spawned enormous debate and controversy among Thomistic scholars. Those who favor the naturalism of Aquinas allege that the discovery is inauthentic: that it represents an inappropriate Kantian reading of his ethics. But as I have discussed previously, there are, in fact, legitimate grounds for the view that there is non-naturalism at work in Thomistic ethics. And in this regard, my findings are partly based upon the efforts of a certain modern scholar against whom I shall now direct a critique: Germain Grisez.

It goes without saying that the latter philosopher proceeds very far in recognizing and emphasizing the non-naturalistic character of Thomistic ethics. He focuses upon St. Thomas' view that human beings enjoy a natural awareness of the laws of nature, or the principles of practical reasoning which direct moral
conduct. I have already discussed some of the details of my interpretation of this view; I will provide more in Section Five of this discussion. The present point is that Grisez is correct in observing that such a position is, in fact, present in Thomistic ethics. However, I feel that while his interpretation of the non-naturalism of Aquinas is generally sound, he does not seem to grasp that there is also a naturalistic dimension to Thomistic ethics, why this naturalism is valid, and in what way it serves as the foundation both for St. Thomas' non-naturalism, and for his argument concerning the objectivity of normative principles.

To understand such apparent failings, it is, of course, necessary to examine some of the main postulates in the position of Germain Grisez. And so in the following discussion, I will first briefly explicate Grisez's arguments supporting his non-naturalistic interpretation of Thomistic ethics; arguments with which I generally agree. Following this, I will discuss why he feels a naturalistic reading of that moral philosophy is fraught with difficulties: his arguments against what he terms "scholastic natural law theory". And finally, I will demonstrate why a correct interpretation of St. Thomas' naturalism avoids such difficulties, and how Grisez appears to have overlooked the indispensable role it plays alongside St. Thomas' non-naturalism in the latter's effort to establish the legitimacy of moral science.

*   *   *   *

-151-
[i]. Grisez's Non-naturalism

In his essay "The First Principle of Practical Reason", and in volume one of his work The Way of the Lord Jesus, Germain Grisez advances the main postulates of his non-naturalistic interpretation of Thomistic ethics. This interpretation is based primarily on certain arguments made by Saint Thomas in his "Treatise On Law", arguments in which he discusses the human operation of practical reasoning within the context of his account of the law of nature. From the text of this discussion, it becomes abundantly clear that Aquinas holds that practical reason is governed or directed by distinct normative principles of which human beings enjoy a natural awareness, and that it is these principles which comprise the natural law.

For example, in ST. I-II. 91. 3., Aquinas, in drawing an analogy between theoretical reasoning and practical reasoning, refers to the principles governing these activities, and states that they are "naturally known" and "indemonstrable":

...just as, in the speculative reason, from naturally known indemonstrable principles, we draw the conclusions of the various sciences, the knowledge of which is not imported to us by nature, but acquired by the efforts of reason, so too it is from the precepts of the natural law, as from general and indemonstrable principles, that human reason needs to proceed to the more particular determination of certain matters.
Later, in ST. I-II. 94. 2., he develops such an analogy further, maintaining that the first principles of practical reason and theoretical reason are both "self-evident" and "apprehended universally". Within the same article, he also conveys what the first principles of theoretical reasoning and practical reasoning each involve, as well as how and why they are really distinct, explaining in this regard that they are distinguished by the respective objects of the rational operations which they govern:

For that which before all else falls under apprehension is being... Therefore the first indemonstrable principle is that the same thing cannot be affirmed and denied at the same time... Now as being is the first thing that falls under apprehension simply [i.e. under theoretical reasoning], so good is the first thing that falls under the apprehension of practical reason, which is directed to action: since every agent acts for an end under the aspect of good. Consequently, the first principle in the practical reason is one founded on the notion of good, viz., that good is that which all things seek after. Hence, this is the first precept of law, that good is to be done and pursued and evil is to be avoided. All other precepts of natural law are based upon this: so that whatever the practical reason naturally apprehends as man's good, [or evil], belongs to the precepts of the natural law as something to be done or avoided.

Finally, Aquinas accounts for how exactly "all other precepts of natural law" or subsequent principles of practical reason, as derived from the first principle of practical reasoning, [i.e. the FPPR], come to be formed:

Since... good has the nature of an end, and evil, the nature of a contrary, hence it is that all those things to which man has a natural inclination, are naturally
apprehended by him as being good, and consequently as objects of pursuit, and their contraries as evil, and objects of avoidance.

In other words, he argues that insofar as its first principle directs practical reason to the pursuit of an end, subsequent principles determine which specific ends are to be pursued from the objects or ends presented to practical reason by natural human inclinations.

On the basis of the foregoing arguments, Grisez formulates his non-naturalistic interpretation of Thomistic ethics. First, like St. Thomas, Grisez argues that human beings naturally engage in two types of rational activity: the activity of practical reasoning, and the activity of theoretical reasoning. Furthermore, he maintains that each of these rational activities is governed by certain principles of which, as the starting points of the activities themselves, human beings must enjoy a natural or intuitive awareness. In other words, Grisez holds that such principles, by definition, must be indemonstrable or self-evident, [i.e. that they must be presupposed by the activities they direct, precisely because the activities are directed by them, or precisely because they are the principles or the starting points of these activities].

In the De Veritate, Aquinas argues that there is no theoretical reasoning or demonstrative reasoning without the first principles of demonstration, as all demonstrations presuppose these principles. After all, every act of demonstrating assumes a
certain modus operandi; it assumes that there are basic rules of demonstration which direct the method of demonstrating itself. Clearly, one cannot demonstrate without some kind of method, without any rules of demonstration. It is logical, therefore, to conclude that the human mind enjoys an intuitive or natural awareness of the basic rules of demonstrative reasoning in a manner which is at least logically prior to all its acts of demonstrating. And it is also logical to conclude that such rules must therefore be indemonstrable and self-evident to the mind.

Analogously, in the "Treatise On Law", Aquinas is arguing that there is no practical reasoning, or deliberative reasoning without the first principles of deliberation. All deliberation, by definition, is end-oriented, and so it must presuppose an awareness of the concept of an end, the general directive to pursue ends, and what general ends are to be pursued. Otherwise, deliberation itself would be impossible: not only would there be nothing about which to deliberate, but the mind would also have no orientation to the pursuit of ends from which deliberation arises.

And so it is that Saint Thomas concludes that like theoretical reasoning, practical reasoning is also governed by naturally known indemonstrable and self-evident first principles, and that it is from these principles that all acts of deliberating are made possible. This conclusion forms the heart of Grisez's non-naturalistic interpretation of Aquinas.
But there is more to that interpretation. Grisez argues that the operation of practical reason, which governs moral conduct, is really distinct from that of theoretical reason, and that the former is, therefore, directed by its own really distinct principles. Simply put, Grisez's point is that the principles which govern demonstration cannot be the same as those which govern deliberation. The latter principles are normative; they direct reason to the pursuit of ends. And so they are not, as Grisez ultimately concludes, derived from the principles of theoretical reason, but are autonomous and independent principles.

According to Grisez, ethics or moral science for Saint Thomas does not have any basis in the theoretical sciences; it does not involve the mere application of theoretical principles, those relevant to such sciences. Grisez notes that Aquinas clearly distinguishes the principles of practical reasoning from those of theoretical reasoning, calling them both indemonstrable, naturally known, and self-evident. Hence, Grisez argues that ethics is an autonomous or independent science. In other words, he holds that for Aquinas, the operation of practical reasoning is not to be understood as theory put into practice, or as theory applied to the will or to action. In contrast, he agrees with Aquinas that insofar as theoretical and practical reasoning have different objects, they each operate in different ways and according to different principles.
Again, for St. Thomas, theoretical reasoning is directed toward the attainment of truth: the understanding of "what is"; he argues that in this regard the mind seeks to discover and grasp "the order which it finds". Practical reasoning, on the other hand, has as its object not truth, but goodness; it is not toward the understanding of "what is" which practical reasoning is directed, but toward the understanding and the realization through deliberate action of "what ought to be". In this case, as Aquinas holds, the mind does not seek to grasp the order which it finds, but to impose order through deliberate action.

Grisez concludes on the basis of the latter distinction that it cannot be the case that the operations of theoretical reasoning and practical reasoning involve the same rational processes and are directed by the same principles. Theoretical reasoning, as seen, is ultimately governed by the principle of non-contradiction, that "something cannot both be and not be at the same time in the same respect". It is this principle with supplies the basic criterion by which reason determines or establishes "what is". On the other hand, practical reasoning is governed by a first principle suited to its objective: "the good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided". This principle supplies the basic criterion by which reason determines or establishes "what ought to be", and accordingly directs action.

Again, Grisez agrees with Aquinas that practical reasoning, by definition, operates for the sake of bringing something about; it is deliberate and purposeful, and so goal-oriented, or "good-
oriented" [in the generic sense of goodness, as described earlier, in which the term "good" simply denotes an "end"). Hence, Grisez concludes that the FPPR articulates the primary function which is implicit in practical reason itself when it states that the goal or good is "to be pursued and done", and that evil, which simply refers to the antithesis of this goal or good, is "to be avoided".

My position is that Grisez is correct in arguing that such a principle is implicit in the operation of practical reasoning itself, and that this is indeed the Thomistic view. As I discussed in Section Three, insofar as it is goal-oriented, practical reason is by nature prescriptive, and so it stands to reason that its first principle is prescriptive in character. He is also correct in observing how subsequent principles directing practical reason are derived from the first.

As Grisez argues, the FPPR opens up reason to the pursuit of possible ends; it essentially makes reason practical by orienting it to the pursuit of goals. But the first principle does not specify exactly which ends practical reason is to pursue. Again, as stated previously, according to Aquinas, such specification occurs via the experience of natural human inclinations: these present to practical reason specific ends or goods which reason then articulates in the form of further, more specific principles governing its conduct.
In summary, Germain Grisez holds that human beings enjoy a natural awareness of what is good for them, and of the principles directing them to what is good; and the argument which he advances is clearly based upon the teachings of St. Thomas in "The Treatise on Law". To reiterate, Grisez provides the following line of reasoning. First, he points out that for St. Thomas, practical reasoning, or thinking for the sake of bringing something about through action, is just as natural to human beings as theoretical reasoning, or thinking for the sake of understanding or obtaining truth. Grisez states that each type of rational activity must operate according to principles in keeping with its respective object, principles which are "self-evident" and of which human beings must be naturally aware, given that they are presupposed by the activities which they direct, as the starting point of those activities.

All theoretical reasoning presupposes the principle of non-contradiction, which supplies the basic criterion by which the mind determines the truth about "what is". As seen, St. Thomas holds that human beings enjoy an intuitive grasp of this principle as soon as their intellects first encounter the object of intellection: being.50 Similarly, the first principle of practical reasoning is presupposed by all rational deliberation about what is to be done; it supplies the basic criterion by which the mind determines "what ought to be". In a manner of speaking, this principle serves as the major premise in all deliberation about practical affairs; all such deliberation begins with this
principle.

Again, insofar as practical reasoning aims at bringing something about through deliberate action, it is purposeful or goal-oriented, i.e. it aims at some good, [in the generic sense of goodness]. It is inherent, then, in the operation of practical reasoning that "the good is to be pursued and done", [i.e. that the goal toward which it aims is to be achieved], and that "evil" [the contrary of this goal] is "to be avoided", [i.e. that the contrary of the goal, or whatever obstructs its pursuit, is not to be achieved]. Subsequent principles of practical reason are based upon the first principle, and are formed from those ends presented to reason by natural human inclinations.

From what has been said above, there would certainly appear, then, to be strong evidence supporting the view that there is non-naturalism at work in Thomistic ethics. Aquinas himself states that the precepts of natural law which govern human action are indemonstrable, self-evident and naturally known. And so I do not dispute Grisez's argument that St. Thomas also employs a non-naturalistic approach to establishing the legitimacy of moral science. Rather, I completely agree with Grisez on this point. What I do dispute, however, is his additional claim that any naturalistic interpretation of Aquinas' moral philosophy is misguided. In order to explain why I think that Grisez is mistaken in this regard, I must first explain why he takes such a stance.

* * * *

-160-
Although he advances a non-naturalistic interpretation of Thomistic ethics, Germain Grisez is certainly aware that the majority of modern commentaries on that moral theory consider it to be naturalistic. He regards this fact as lamentable, and argues that it is the result of centuries in which Aquinas' view has been confused with a naturalistic approach to ethics endorsed by what Grisez terms "scholastic natural law theory" [SNLT]. Francisco Suarez is the philosopher whom he regards as the principal advocate of such a theory. And while this theory is certainly based upon the teachings of Aquinas, I agree with Grisez that it has misrepresented them.

As Grisez explains, SNLT argues that morally right actions are those "in agreement with nature", and that actions "not in agreement with nature are morally wrong". Nature here refers primarily to human nature, that explored in philosophical psychology, and the laws of nature, which express what is morally right and wrong, can be discovered simply through the accurate description of human nature, which is seen as universal and immutable. The laws themselves are ultimately viewed as such by the theory because they are interpreted as commands or imperatives issued by God, and instilled in people by Him as the Creator of human nature. It is this basis in God's Will or Command which, according to SNLT, supplies a normative quality to what would
otherwise simply be facts about human beings. In other words, the theory holds that insofar as God created human nature, it follows that facts about human nature imply what God wills for humanity; i.e. how He wills that people should be, including how they ought to act, as a consequence of the natural inclinations which He imprints upon them.

For instance, human beings have a natural power to reason, and an inclination to the pursuit of knowledge; and so according to SNLT, people ought to act rationally, and obtain knowledge. God creates people with the power to reason; and hence, He wills that they behave in accordance with this natural power, that they use reason. Indeed, according to the theory, every characteristic faculty of human nature, as sanctioned by God's creative act, manifests what God wills for humanity. The theory holds that these faculties, which express themselves in the form of natural human inclinations, therefore imply moral imperatives, essentially the limits of right conduct. And since the power to reason, and the desire for knowledge are distinctively human traits, right conduct is essentially rational conduct; it is conduct in accordance with knowledge about the truth concerning what is natural to human beings, as rationally discoverable.

In SNLT, a knowledge of what is morally right and wrong therefore begins with self-knowledge; knowledge of one's nature. The theory contends that human beings can determine how they ought to act by reflecting upon what they are, and what actions are consistent with their natural powers. Such knowledge is not innate
or even intuitive; it is gained via a theoretical understanding of human nature, and then directed to practical matters. Every natural human faculty has a specific objective toward which human beings are naturally inclined.

For example, the faculty of nutrition and reproduction has as its objective self-preservation and procreation. Reason can determine this objective, and then formulate [discover] a moral precept based upon it so as to direct deliberate action in such a way that the objective is met rather than undermined. According to the theory, to act in accordance with such a precept is to act "in agreement with nature", or to act in a manner which promotes what is natural, and so conforms to God's Will.

But to act at all is, of course, to act deliberately or willfully. For both Aquinas and Suarez, the will is the intellectual or rational appetite whose natural object is the good;" it generally acts to bring something about, [i.e. whatever reason perceives as an end], and so the will presupposes intent. Grisez argues that for Suarez, the latter position is the foundation for Aquinas' determination of the FPPR, [or what Suarez simply regards as the first principle of theoretical reasoning directed toward the object of the will].

As the will, whose natural aim is the good, is the source of all action, Suarez holds that the FPPR, or the basic rule directing moral behaviour, must therefore pertain to the conduct of the will itself. Reason discovers this principle by reflecting upon the object of the will. And thus, according to Suarez, the
FPPR is best expressed not in the prescriptive form cited by Aquinas - "The good is to be done and pursued and evil is to be avoided" - but in the stronger, imperative form: "Do good and avoid evil".

Grisez argues that the latter position testifies to one of many mistakes in SNLT. Although clearly based upon St. Thomas' ethical arguments, especially those in his "Treatise on Law", Grisez points out that the theory in fact departs significantly from its inspiration. When, for instance, Suarez states that the FPPR is "Do good and avoid evil", a statement which prima facie appears to be synonymous with that made by Aquinas regarding the FPPR, Grisez argues that the former is completely misinterpreting Thomistic ethics by limiting the concept of good in that principle to only what is morally good. Grisez points out that "Do good and avoid evil" is strictly a moral imperative; it focuses on the good of actions. The good that can be done, he says, refers solely to what is morally good, to rectitude in action. But the FPPR in Thomistic ethics prescribes not just that the good is to be done, but that it is to be pursued; and this suggests that the term "good" in the principle denotes more than moral goodness.

As seen previously, St. Thomas' concept of goodness is, in fact, far broader than moral goodness, or rectitude in action. Generically, the term good for Aquinas refers to an end or final cause; specifically, the term refers to the completion or perfection of natural human potencies, that toward which human beings are naturally inclined, and which fulfill them qua human.
What is morally good is just a part of this broader concept of goodness which, as Grisez states, includes such substantive goods as self-preservation and knowledge, and toward which he says moral goodness itself is instrumental, as it involves those actions conducive to the substantive goods.¹⁵

Grisez rightly observes that Aquinas' theory of natural law is derived from the teleological approach underlying his whole moral theory, the view that the primary sense of human goodness denotes a set of ends which fulfill or perfect human beings. Again, he notes that for St. Thomas, the first principle of practical reason functions so as to prescribe that what is good to human beings, or what stands as a human end, "be done and pursued", and what is contrary to the human end or good "be avoided". Subsequent principles or laws of nature, as seen, serve to prescribe what specific ends or goods are to be pursued and done, as these become manifest to reason through the experience of natural inclinations.

The laws of nature, then, do not simply concern what is morally good in the Thomistic theory; rather, they concern what is humanly good, i.e. the human ends, or what is generally perfective or fulfilling of human beings qua human, and to which moral goodness serves as a means. If, in fact, this were not the case, and natural law pertained solely to what is morally good, as SNLT holds, then, says Grisez, it would follow that vicious behavior would not fall within the scope of practical reasoning at all, and so could not actually be accomplished through deliberate action:
If the first principle of practical reason were *Do morally good acts*, then morally bad acts would fall outside the order of practical reason; if *Do morally good acts* nevertheless were the first precept of natural law, and morally bad acts fell within the order of practical reason, then there would be a domain of reason outside natural law."

In other words, because natural law, including the FPPR, comprises the principles which direct or govern the conduct of practical reasoning itself, reasoning is practical only insofar as it is directed by such principles. And so if those principles consist strictly of moral imperatives or precepts, then practical reasoning can deliberate only about what is morally good. This means that immoral action, [i.e. deliberately vicious behavior], either cannot arise from practical reasoning, or that there is a domain of practical reasoning not governed by natural law.

Both of the latter alternatives are, of course, absurd. The first alternative reduces vicious behavior to non-rational movement, as no one can deliberately perform what is morally wrong when all of the principles from which deliberation springs are imperatives for morally right action. The second alternative, which will return immoral action to the scope of practical reasoning, contradicts the argument that the natural law comprises the principles of such reasoning, as the latter would seem to be able to operate independently of them.

And so Grisez concludes that the correct interpretation of St. Thomas' theory of natural law is that the principles governing practical reason are not moral imperatives or precepts. Rather,
he argues that they are directives or prescriptions for human ends or goals, and that the first of these principles supplies the most basic directive; it articulates the goal-oriented nature of practical reason itself and prescribes, as Grisez paraphrases, that one "Work in pursuit of the end".\(^{17}\)

Grisez also observes that only the latter interpretation is consistent with Saint Thomas' teaching that both moral and immoral behavior fall within the domain of practical reason. Because the natural law is not seen by him as a set of moral imperatives, but as prescriptions to human ends or goods, St. Thomas can argue that both moral and immoral actions are governed by practical reasoning. In fact, according to Aquinas, both virtuous and vicious people act for the same general ends, as prescribed by the principles of practical reasoning.\(^{18}\) But, as he states in the De Veritate, \(^{19}\) it is the improper use of the principles by the vicious which leads them into error. Grisez explains this view by drawing a comparison between errors made in the operation of theoretical reasoning, and those made in the operation of practical reasoning:

Just as the principle of contradiction is operative even in false judgements, so the first principle of practical reason is operative in wrong evaluations and decisions. First principles do not sanction error, but of themselves they set only limited requirements. As a disregard of the principle of contradiction makes discourse disintegrate into nonsense, so a disregard of the first principle of practical reason would make action dissolve into chaotic behavior...Hence first principles must be supplemented by other principles and by a sound reasoning process if correct conclusions are to be reached.\(^{40}\)
Later in the same passage, he describes what kinds of factors may contribute to errors in practical reasoning:

Assumption of a group of principles inadequate to a problem, failure to observe the facts, or error in reasoning can lead to results within the scope of first principles but not sanctioned by them. The first precept directs us to direct our action toward ends within human power, and even immoral action in part fulfills this precept, for even vicious men act for a human good while accepting the violation of a more adequate human good. I

The latter point is, of course, consistent with one which I made in Section Three in which I discussed the issue of moral error, and how it can occur even though every human being enjoys a natural awareness of the principles of practical reasoning. And indeed, thus far I have emphasized those aspects of Grisez' position in which there is nothing but common ground between his interpretation of Thomistic ethics and my own. That I have been influenced by his arguments is readily apparent.

But it is with regard to Grisez's principal line of critique against SNLT - i.e. his criticism of its overt naturalism - that an obvious difference arises between our respective views. For while I agree with Grisez that naturalism of the sort found in SNLT is unsound, I disagree with his view that it represents the hallmark of naturalistic interpretations of Thomistic ethics, and that the arguments which succeed against Suarez have any bearing on a correct reading of St. Thomas' naturalism. To explain why this is my position, it is first necessary to examine such
arguments, and then consider them in the light of the true character of Thomistic ethics.

iii. The Invalid Naturalism of "Scholastic Natural Law Theory"

As seen, SNLT advances a somewhat simplistic naturalistic argument for the objectivity of ethics. Normative principles are determined from the theoretical description of human nature and the theological argument that it has its source in God, as the Creator of human nature. Natural human faculties, or more specifically, the inclinations they bear, are seen as expressions of God's Will pertaining to how human beings should act. Actions in accordance with these inclinations are thus viewed as commanded by God, and so as morally imperative. As a result, SNLT holds that by reflecting upon natural human inclinations and their objects, reason can easily formulate general rules of conduct by which to direct action "in agreement with nature", and in conformity with God's Will. It is these general rules, ultimately seen as promulgated by God, which the theory says comprise the natural law.

Grisez holds that there are three major deficiencies in the above argument. First and foremost, as he argues in volume one of The Way of the Lord Jesus, it is impossible to deduce normative principles solely from facts about human nature. He points out
that SNLT is in violation of the naturalistic fallacy; it attempts to reduce goodness to naturalness.

Grisez is correct; facts about human nature alone do not imply moral imperatives. Again, just because human beings have the power to reason does not, by itself, mean that they ought to act rationally. And because people are inclined to the pursuit of knowledge, or self-preservation, or friendship, does not demonstrate that such things are good, that they ought to be pursued. Clearly, more is needed for such a demonstration: an argument showing why the objects of natural inclinations are good, and why the inclinations themselves imply normative principles.

Of course, SNLT attempts to supply such an argument when it alleges that since God created human beings with certain natural inclinations, they reflect his Command or Will for what human beings ought to do. In this way, the advocate of the SNLT can contend that while facts about human nature do not have in and of themselves any normative quality, their basis in God's Will provides this quality for them. Grisez replies to this argument by stating that even if it can be shown that human nature is created by God, and thereby that God commands how people should act through the natural inclinations which He instills in them, this illustration supplies nothing more than a fact about God; it does not actually prove that facts about human nature imply normative principles.\textsuperscript{43}
According to Grisez, the position of SNLT appears valid because it presupposes the normative proposition that God's Command ought to be obeyed, for only then does God's Command for how people ought to act imply that people should, in fact, act accordingly. However, Grisez recognizes that SNLT provides no grounds for such a proposition; it is merely presupposed, not demonstrated. He concludes, therefore, that the theory's attempt to prove that natural inclinations imply normative principles is also groundless, for the normative proposition which serves as the basis for the theory's main argument remains unsubstantiated.

One can, of course, attempt to defend SNLT by pointing out that the proposition "God's Command ought to be obeyed" follows from the Absolute Goodness of God. After all, if God is absolutely good, it implies that what He Wills must be good also; from which it follows that His Will or Command, as good, ought to be obeyed etc." But this argument presupposes that God is Absolute Goodness, a proposition which, again, SNLT certainly asserts but does not demonstrate, at least not philosophically.

But having said this, a further attempt at defending SNLT is still possible. The theory acknowledges St. Thomas' argument for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness, [the argument from ST. I. 5. 1. which I explicated in my critique of the position of Kretzmann and Stump]. On the basis of this argument, it seems possible to demonstrate that God's Absolute Goodness follows from the metaphysical position [assuming it is correct] that He is Perfect or Absolute Being. For if God is Absolute or Perfect
Being, then He is Absolute Goodness, since being and goodness are co-extensive. And of course, if God is Absolute Goodness, then whatever He Wills or Commands is absolutely good, and so ought to be obeyed, [insofar as goodness analytically denotes what “ought to be”]. And thus, God's Command or Will about how people ought to act as expressed in the natural inclinations which he instills in them, ought to be obeyed.

However, the latter strategy will not work to salvage SNLT either, and for two reasons. First, because one cannot validly conclude that God is Absolute Goodness from Aquinas' argument for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness, since such an argument presupposes the goodness of God. As seen in my critique of Kretzmann and Stump, some of the key premises in the argument which shows that being and goodness are the same in reference depend upon subordinate arguments demonstrating what I have termed St. Thomas' concept of the “specific sense of goodness”: the realization or actualization of natural potencies.

But as I have indicated earlier, [i.e. in Section Three], and as I will fully explicate in Section Five, such subordinate arguments involve the notion that all natural substances are oriented toward the full actualization of natural potencies because it is in this way that they strive to imitate God's nature as Pure Act. Hence, that God is the ultimate good of all natural substances underlies St. Thomas' argument for the co-extensiveness
of being and goodness; and thus, to conclude that God is good from that argument would involve circular reasoning.

Needless to say, the latter point also signifies that the proposition that God is good plays an important role in what I have formerly interpreted, [and to this point, only briefly described], to be the genuine naturalistic approach of Thomistic ethics. For as I have alleged that Aquinas’ argument for the teleological character of nature, which is central to his naturalism, is derived from the notion that all creatures try to imitate God, I have, in effect, confessed that it is the Goodness of God, [His status as the end of all creatures], which serves as the foundation for the argument that nature is teleological. This would seem to put St. Thomas' naturalism in the same position of that of SNLT, as both appear to presuppose and depend upon the goodness of God.

But as I will convey momentarily, such is not the case, because Aquinas provides a philosophical demonstration for God's Absolute Goodness which SNLT lacks. And while it may appear that this argument could be of great assistance to SNLT, if combined with it, this is not the case either. And such a fact brings me to the second reason for why appealing to St. Thomas' argument for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness, or any of his other naturalistic arguments would do little to support the position of SNLT.

Simply put, while it may appear that St. Thomas' naturalistic arguments would be of use to SNLT, this is because, as I will
demonstrate momentarily, the former are valid independently of the latter. In other words, SNLT adds nothing to Aquinas' theory except a weak form of naturalism; and hence, the arguments of SNLT are superfluous when added to the naturalistic arguments of Thomistic ethics. It goes without saying that if one combines a valid theory with an invalid theory, the latter will benefit; but it will not make the former any more valid, just needlessly more complex.

And so supplementing SNLT with St. Thomas' argument for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness, which itself is supported by arguments demonstrating the teleological character of nature and the specific sense of goodness, [the cornerstone of his true naturalistic argument], renders SNLT redundant. What is more, since, as already discussed, the latter theory has problems over and above its ineffective naturalism, "it would be a disservice to Thomistic ethics to burden it with difficulties which it would otherwise avoid, and which actually contradict St. Thomas' teaching.

I shall soon demonstrate that Aquinas' naturalistic arguments, unlike SNLT, circumvent the line of criticism which Grisez directs against the naturalism of that theory. But before I provide this demonstration, I must discuss Grisez's third and final argument against the naturalistic approach employed by SNLT.

Perhaps the most formidable critique which Grisez directs against the position of Suarez regarding natural law pertains to the latter's general view that it must be theoretically deduced
from human nature, and then imposed upon the will. In line with his non-naturalistic interpretation of Thomistic ethics, Grisez argues that such a view is wholly misguided since, to repeat, the principles of practical reasoning, as Aquinas says, are "self-evident" and "naturally known".

Consequently, Grisez holds that the correct interpretation of St. Thomas' theory is that the FPPR is not a rule or imperative imposed upon practical reasoning from outside, i.e., from theoretical reason upon the will, or from God. Rather, as seen, Grisez's view is that the FPPR is implicit in the operation of practical reason itself, or willing and deliberating for the sake of an end; as he states:

... it is a self-evident principle in which reason prescribes the first condition of its own practical office.

This first condition is, of course, that insofar as reason is practical, it is directed to the realization of an end: it is, by definition, to do and pursue good. Subsequent principles, to repeat, become apparent to practical reason through the experience of natural inclinations. Directed by its first principle to the pursuit of an end, reason immediately apprehends in the objects of natural inclinations what specific ends it is to pursue, and intuits thereby a set of values or precepts by which to guide action.
According to Grisez, even if it were possible, there would be no need to deduce the natural law and impose it upon practical reasoning like a ruler imposing order upon an unruly populace. For in this case, the populace is not unruly, but naturally equipped with its own set of rules and able to act autonomously. Nor does he think that there is any alternative to this view.

Grisez rightly observes that to argue that natural law is deduced theoretically, and imposed upon practical reasoning from outside, is to assume the absurd notion that prior to this imposition, practical reason somehow operates without principles, deliberation without purpose, and will or rational appetite without a prior apprehension of its object. He explains that such a notion is quite contrary to St. Thomas' argument that reason is practical as a consequence of natural law, as herein lie the principles or starting points of practical reason; and that the act of willing requires a prior knowledge of its object or end, for otherwise the concept of willing becomes nonsensical, since it presupposes that something is being willed, i.e. some end.  

And so Grisez concludes:

...our willing of ends requires knowledge of them, and the directive knowledge prior to the natural movements of our will is precisely the basic principles of practical reason...The precepts of natural law...must be antecedent to all acts of our will.51

And he states that "there is nothing surprising about this
...so long as we understand law as intelligence ordering [directing] human actions toward an end rather than as a superior ordering, [commanding] a subject's performance."

But SNLT clearly does not understand law in this way. It does not argue that natural law involves self-evident, naturally known principles which are implicit in the teleological character of practical reason itself. Rather, the theory holds that natural law involves moral imperatives deduced theoretically and then imposed upon practical reasoning and the will.

The latter position is, of course, untenable. It assumes one or the other of two absurd claims: either that practical reasoning and the will begin to operate only after sufficient theoretical knowledge of natural law is obtained, so as to the furnish them with principles, [which means that people are unable to act deliberately until they have deduced certain moral imperatives from their nature, including the deliberate act of engaging in such a deduction!], or that practical reason and the will operate chaotically, or without any directives prior to the theoretical deduction and imposition of their principles, [which contradicts the orderly and purposeful nature intrinsic to deliberating and willing].
In summary, Germain Grisez rejects what he regards as the preeminent naturalistic interpretation of Thomistic ethics, and which he terms "scholastic natural law theory", for the following reasons:

1. The theory regards the principles of practical reasoning as moral imperatives, whereby it interprets the first principle as the moral precept: "Do good and avoid evil". This reduces the concept of good in that principle to what is morally good [rectitude in action]. Hence, the theory overlooks the Thomistic argument that the concept of the good in the FPPR has a much broader meaning: the principle orients reason to the pursuit of an end or goal, which is what the term good primarily denotes. And subsequent principles direct reason to those substantive ends [or goods] which are the objects of natural human inclinations, and to which moral goods [actions which fulfill the ends] are instrumental. Furthermore, the view that natural law consists of moral imperatives rather than general directives to ends, removes all immoral conduct from the scope of practical reasoning, since the principles which govern such reasoning would restrict deliberation to what is morally good. This too is inconsistent with St. Thomas' more realistic teaching that the principles of practical reasoning govern both moral and immoral action, with the latter involving the misapplication of those principles, in the same manner that the principles of theoretical reasoning govern both sound and unsound demonstrations.

2. The theory argues that natural law is theoretically deducible from human nature, as this is created by God so that natural human inclinations can be inferred as conveying His Command or Will for how human beings ought to behave. Although such an argument bears a superficial resemblance to what I regard as the authentic naturalism of Aquinas, I agree with Grisez that it is deficient in at least two ways. First, the argument is guilty of the naturalistic fallacy by committing an illicit transition from the merely descriptive to the normative. Descriptions of natural inclinations do not in and of themselves imply how people ought to act. Secondly, the theory's attempt to circumvent the latter difficulty by adding the force of God's Command or Will to the equation is of no help. A description of what God commands does not imply the normative proposition that His Command ought to be obeyed. The theory's argument presupposes this proposition, but does not demonstrate it.

3. Finally, SNLT argues that in a manner analogous to a ruler imposing order upon his subjects, natural law, comprised of moral
imperatives deduced theoretically, is not implicit in practical reasoning, but is imposed upon it from outside. This position contradicts St. Thomas' argument that the principles of practical reasoning are self-evident and naturally known, governing its operations the same way that the principles of demonstration govern the operation of theoretical reasoning. Essentially, his point is that the principles are, by definition, the starting points of rational activity, whether practical or theoretical, and hence must be underived and grasped intuitively. To argue otherwise has absurd consequences. Since, according to SNLT, natural law must be imposed upon practical reasoning, it suggests that acts of deliberating and willing can occur in the absence of practical principles [i.e. prior to the imposition of such principles], even though the acts are, by definition, practical: i.e. directive and purposeful in nature. This is analogous to saying that theoretical reasoning can operate and somehow conduct demonstrations even if it is without theoretical principles — the principles upon which demonstrations are based! The only alternative to this position within the theory is to argue that practical reasoning commences only after the theoretical deduction and imposition of natural law; but this implies that people cannot engage in deliberate action, including the act of theoretical reasoning, until they first acquire a complete theoretical knowledge of the rules of such action!

From the latter arguments it certainly appears, then, that Grisez effectively dispels the main postulates of SNLT, and the contention that they accurately reflect St. Thomas' moral theory. Grisez demonstrates that the naturalistic view of Thomistic ethics advanced by that theory is both invalid, and contrary to Aquinas' own teachings. In the process, Grisez appears to provide even stronger evidence supporting a purely non-naturalistic reading of St. Thomas' moral philosophy. And so if Grisez is correct in his view that to interpret Aquinas as a naturalist is to subscribe to the strategy of SNLT, then he has constructed a very compelling case against any such interpretation.
But it is my contention that Grisez is wrong in this view. For while I agree with him that the naturalism of SNLT is unacceptable, and that Thomistic ethics truly has a non-naturalistic dimension, I disagree that this is its only dimension. As I conveyed in Section Three, my position is that there is both naturalism and non-naturalism at work in Aquinas' theory, and that the former is actually the basis for the latter. It is also my position that the true naturalism of Aquinas is quite unlike that employed by SNLT.

For one thing, it is quite clear to me from the text of the "Treatise on Law" that for St. Thomas, the principles comprising the natural law are not moral imperatives imposed upon practical reason, but that they are, as Grisez holds, general directives to ends implicit in the operation of practical reason itself, rendering them self-evident and naturally known. More importantly, it is also clear to me that the true naturalism of Aquinas does not commit the naturalistic fallacy. And although this naturalism is, like that of SNLT, also grounded in a "metaphysics of divine causality"; it does not claim that the natural law should be construed as commands issued by God; nor does it therefore presuppose that God's commands ought to be obeyed; and nor, finally, does it consist "exclusively of theoretical truths from which reason can derive no practical consequences". The following will attempt to demonstrate that I am correct in this view.

* * * * *

-180-
As I described in Section Three, the naturalism of Thomistic ethics is derived ultimately from his natural theology. It is in his natural theology that he draws a number of conclusions which he utilizes in his ethics: (1). That God exists, (2). That He is Necessary Being or Pure Actuality, (3). That He is the efficient cause or Creator of all contingent reality, (4). That He created deliberately or with purpose, and (5). That the only logical purpose for His act of creation was to manifest His own nature as Pure Act in finite form. In Section Five, I shall explicate all of the arguments which reach such conclusions, examining their philosophic character and validity. However, for the purposes of the present discussion, it is enough to focus upon the implications which some of these conclusions have on St. Thomas' metaphysics and philosophy of nature, and how these implications result in a naturalistic argument in his moral theory which avoids the naturalistic fallacy.

From the conclusion that God created deliberately or with purpose, St. Thomas reasons that it follows that God is intelligent and willful, and that He must have had in mind what He created. But since it would be repugnant to the Divine Simplicity [which follows from God's nature as Pure Act or Necessary Being], for there to be a plurality of ideas distinct from Himself in the mind of God, St. Thomas concludes that God's knowledge of what He creates is to be construed as a dimension of His self-knowledge.
In knowing Himself, argues St. Thomas, God knows how His Nature is imitable in an infinite variety of finite forms. Hence, whatever God creates, He creates as specific finite kinds which are diverse imitations of the Divine Nature. And, of course, whatever God creates must be finite, as He cannot create Himself per se, i.e. another God, since the Divine Necessity implies that God is infinite, and there cannot exist more than one infinite being.

The latter argument represents the ultimate foundation in Thomism for the doctrine of the species: the view, basic to Aristotelianism, that reality is comprised of a variety of objectively distinct natural kinds, or natural substances. Since God creates on the basis of His knowledge of the infinite variety of finite forms imitable of His Nature, then it follows that whatever variety He creates, it is divisible into distinct finite forms, i.e. it is divisible into distinct natural kinds or substances. It also follows that these natural kinds have an objective and universal basis in God's mind, that they are based upon or derived from Divine Ideas or Exemplars pertaining to the specific natures of creatures.

The doctrine of the species, which includes the position that human beings, as created by God, represent a distinct natural kind or natural substance, is the first of two key components from St. Thomas' natural philosophy which is essential to the validity of the naturalistic approach he employs in his moral theory. This is because the postulate that there exists an objective and universal human nature is certainly necessary for St. Thomas' overall
argument that there also exist objective and universal normative principles governing human conduct. The reasoning here is that if human nature is objective and universal, [i.e. if there really exists a common human nature], any normative principles based upon it will also bear these qualities.

But such a postulate, while necessary, is not sufficient for establishing the subject matter of a legitimate science of normative ethics. And it is the mistake of SNLT that it did not recognize this fact. The latter theory erroneously contends that the existence of an objective and universal human nature, with its source in God, is sufficient for proving that normative principles with these qualities must also exist, and what in general they involve. But this is not St. Thomas' position. He quite clearly sees that human nature, even as created by God, while objective and universal, does not in and of itself bear any normative quality. More is needed to supply this quality, which raises the issue of the second key component from St. Thomas' philosophy of nature which is essential to the success of his naturalism: the view that nature is teleological.

While the approach of grounding normative principles in an objective and universal human nature might serve to explain why they are also objective and universal, it does not explain why they are normative. The naturalistic fallacy states that such an approach cannot ever explain this. But what if it could be shown that human nature itself is normative, in addition to being objective and universal? Would it not then follow that one could
derive not only objective and universal but also normative principles from human nature? This is, in fact, essentially the strategy employed by Aquinas, again, being inspired in this regard by the ethics of Aristotle.

For St. Thomas, like Aristotle before him, normative ethics is a science of the end or goal of human life; it seeks to understand in what this end consists, and the general means of attaining it. Consequently, for Aquinas, like the Philosopher, normative ethics is a legitimate science only if it can first be shown that such an end exists, and that it is objectively the same for all people. It can be demonstrated quite easily that human life is goal-oriented, as this is implied by the fact that people engage in deliberate action, which is, by definition, purposeful. But this argument suffices to prove only that people pursue goals, it does not prove that there necessarily exists a goal [or set of goals] pursued universally.

It is St. Thomas' argument that nature is teleological which seeks to prove the latter point, his argument that all natural substances, or distinct natural kinds are end-driven, and that they share the same general end, although it varies specifically according to their distinct natures. The question is: "Does St. Thomas succeed?". In other words, is St. Thomas' argument that nature is teleological valid? And even if it is valid, does it prove what St. Thomas needs to prove in order to avoid the naturalistic fallacy: i.e., does it prove that nature is normative, and more specifically, that nature is normative in a
morally relevant sense? I shall provide the answers to the latter questions first.

First of all, would the fact that nature is teleological imply in any sense that nature is normative? The answer is yes. And yet I almost hesitate to explain why, since I suspect that for St. Thomas the explanation would be obvious, that he would regard the terms "normative" and "teleological" as virtually synonymous. This is because both of these terms can be understood either as adjectives or as abstract nouns referring to that which has the quality of prescribing or being prescribed. This is indeed obvious in the case of the term normative: it is, by definition, that which is prescriptive or that which prescribes. It is less obvious, but no less true of the term teleological.

While the latter term can be understood in one sense as meaning simply "that which concerns ends", as in the phrase "a teleological ethic", in contrast to a "deontological ethic"; the term has another, stronger sense, which signifies "that which is goal-oriented, or end-driven". It is this stronger sense which implies prescriptiveness, and hence, normativity, as the following line of reasoning will convey.

As I stated briefly in Section Three, from the standpoint of that which is directed to an end or goal, the absent goal is something which is to be achieved by it, i.e. something which from its perspective is not, but ought to be, or should be. But anything which is regarded or designated as something which ought to be, is something which is prescribed by that which so
designates it. This is because to prescribe is, by definition, to designate "what ought to be". Hence, insofar as something is teleological, and so goal-oriented, it is prescriptive; it designates, by definition, that the goal to which it is oriented is something which ought to be. And since, as seen, what is prescriptive is normative, it follows that something which is teleological is normative. Therefore, if nature is teleological, then nature is normative. And, needless to say, if nature is normative, then the normative can be deduced from nature!

Indeed, as I discussed in Section Three, the argument that there is prescriptiveness, or normativity, implicit in nature, given that nature is end-driven or goal-oriented, is basic to the strategy by which St. Thomas circumvents the naturalistic fallacy. There is no illicit transition from fact to value, or from the descriptive to the prescriptive, if in some cases prescriptions underlie descriptions. If St. Thomas proves that nature is teleological, that it is driven of necessity to some end or ends, then he also proves that it is prescriptive, that ends are prescribed within it. And if he proves that nature is prescriptive, then he proves that it is normative. And if nature is normative, then it would seem that Aquinas has committed no fallacy in deriving the normative from nature.

But having shown that natural teleology implies that there is normativity or prescriptiveness in nature, the more important and difficult question arises: Does natural teleology also imply that there is a specifically moral prescriptiveness or normativity in
nature, i.e., "moral oughts", and not merely so-called "natural oughts"? While, in very general terms, St. Thomas might commit no fallacy in deducing the normative from nature, provided that he validly demonstrates that nature is teleological, the naturalistic fallacy is really concerned with the attempt to deduce specifically moral or ethical norms from nature: as seen in Section Two, the fallacy states that it is invalid to attempt to deduce from nature the principles governing rectitude in action. Thus, to unequivocally avoid committing the naturalistic fallacy, St. Thomas must show not only that natural teleology implies that nature is normative or prescriptive, but that it is normative or prescriptive in a morally relevant sense: that it implies moral norms. The apparent difficulty in providing such a demonstration is the last line of defense orchestrated by anti-naturalism.

Indeed, even if it should be conceded that a teleological nature implies normativity or prescriptiveness in all natural processes, it can be argued that this teleology, or state of being end or goal driven, certainly does not imply that there are moral norms or prescriptions in nature. More specifically, while it seems that natural teleology provides the grounds for certain types of "ought statements", i.e., natural oughts, [e.g., that water naturally "ought", or is naturally disposed and directed to boil at one hundred degrees celsius, and silver naturally "ought" to melt in a wood fire], these are certainly not moral oughts. On the basis of this view, it can be argued further that any ought statements grounded by a specifically human natural teleology are
no different: they are merely natural, not moral oughts.

While a specifically human natural teleology may imply what humans naturally ought, or are naturally directed to be and do, [e.g., that given human nature, and natural human inclinations, people naturally "ought", or are naturally directed to realize their specific potencies, and act in a manner conducive to this end], it nonetheless seems reasonable to ask, in the manner of G.E. Moore, exactly how or why it is morally right for them to do so. In other words, natural teleology may explain that all natural substances, including human beings, are governed by laws which necessitate what they should be or how they should behave, but it does not seem to explain how it is morally right for all natural substances, or at least for human beings, to be or do what nature directs them toward, especially since "moral oughts", unlike "natural oughts", are not laws which necessitate behavior, but laws which an agent is free to abide by or not.

In order to respond to the latter position and demonstrate how, in fact, natural teleology as it bears on human beings does not imply merely natural, but also moral oughts, and why, subsequently, it is morally right for human beings to be and to do what nature directs them to be and do, a couple of very important, [and admittedly subtle], clarifications and distinctions must be made.

First of all, it must be clarified that generally speaking, my position is that natural teleology as uncovered by Aquinas does not, in fact, imply that there are moral or ethical oughts in
nature. As will be addressed momentarily, and then in more detail in Section 5, from the Thomistic standpoint, Divine Providence and the Eternal Law, [which are the ultimate grounds for natural teleology], may certainly imply "natural oughts" insofar as they bear on most creatures, but not moral oughts; e.g., "that water naturally "ought" to boil at one hundred degrees celsius" etc.. What "morally ought" or is morally prescribed pertains to the matter of rectitude in action - i.e., rectitude in deliberate behavior. The "moral", Aquinas argues, is limited to the domain of action, and so "natural oughts" which have no bearing on action are not moral oughts.

Having said this, it is clear to me that there is an exception to the general rule that nature's teleology does not imply moral oughts, and this exception is to be found in the teleology of human nature specifically. The Thomistic conception of Divine Providence and the Eternal Law as it bears on the human being does imply moral oughts, and this is clear from his theory of natural law, or his theory of "the participation of the Eternal Law in the rational creature". The argument which reaches this conclusion revolves around the notion that moral oughts are not synonymous with moral obligations, or duties to act a certain way which are purportedly independent of human ends, but with moral prescriptions, or prescriptions to act a certain way which are ultimately grounded in human ends. [I will explain and defend this notion in a moment].

The point now is that given such a view, and given that
nature is teleological in such a way that human beings are
directed of necessity to act for certain ends, it follows that
such directives, insofar as Aquinas shows that they are manifest
as formalized principles of practical reasoning, and so insofar as
they are natural prescriptions or ordinances of reason directing
action to human ends, are not merely natural, but also moral
oughts: prescriptions directing people to act a certain way, i.e.,
in a way which they perceive, [rightly or wrongly], to be a means
to such ends.

In other words, the directives to pursue certain ends which
are supplied by natural teleology insofar as it bears on human
beings, serve as the source for the first principles of morality -
the basic prescriptions directing all human action." For Aquinas,
the specific quality of rectitude in an action, [or its lack
thereof], is determined ultimately with reference to such
principles." This is because all action is derived from such
principles, and governed by them. Simply put, human beings act or
engage in deliberate conduct because nature's teleology directs
them to realize certain ends. These directives, or "oughts", are
moral insofar as they are formalized within the operation of
practical reason as rational ordinances or principles which direct
and govern action. Aquinas' position is that the rectitude of an
action is ultimately determined, at least in part, according to
the conduciveness of the action with regard to the ends toward
which nature's teleology directs it. 70

In very general terms, then, my argument that the natural
teleology identified by Aquinas implies moral oughts is essentially the following:

[1]. The domain of deliberate action is the domain of the moral.

[2]. Insofar as deliberate action is purposeful, it is, by definition, goal-oriented or end-driven.

[3]. The pursuit of deliberate ends presupposes the existence and awareness of directives to the pursuit of non-deliberate ends as the starting points of deliberation, [since all willing presupposes prior knowledge or awareness of some end].

[4]. Such directives are thus the first principles of the deliberative process that concludes with the pursuit of deliberate ends through action.

[5]. Thus, the rectitude of actions is based ultimately upon their conformity to such directives, insofar as these directives constitute the principles which govern actions.

[8]. Since such directives constitute the principles which govern action, and which serve to determine its rectitude, they are therefore moral.

[9]. The existence and universality of such directives to the pursuit of non-deliberate ends is the result of natural teleology.

[10]. Therefore, natural teleology supplies specifically "moral oughts", directives governing deliberate actions.

In summary, and as stated previously, it is nature's teleology which provides and grounds the principles of practical reason which direct and govern deliberate behaviour. And since the principles which direct and govern deliberate behaviour are, by definition, moral principles, [as the domain of the moral is the domain of action], it therefore follows that natural teleology provides and grounds moral principles.

Now, as said, the basic notion around which this argument
revolves is that moral oughts are prescriptions to act a certain way, [for human ends], not obligations or duties to act certain way which are wholly independent of human ends. It is this distinction which is critical to understanding why, if nature's teleology directs people to the pursuit of certain ends, thus implying what human beings ought to do and to be, why human beings ought, [in a moral sense - i.e., why it is morally right], for them to do what they ought to do.

The question of why it is morally right for human beings to do what they naturally ought to do only makes sense if what determines the rectitude of an action is independent of the ends which constitute human well-being or fulfillment, or the ends, [non-deliberate], which all actions must ultimately be directed toward, and which serve as the principles of action. In other words, it only makes sense to ask: "Why ought I do what I ought to do, or why is it morally right to do what I am by nature directed to do, [i.e., pursue the non-deliberate ends fulfilling of me qua human]?", if it makes sense to hold that a theory of right can be independent of a theory of good. Only then would it make sense to suggest that what human beings ought to do as a consequence of what nature's teleology directs them to do could somehow be morally wrong.

The legacy of Kant's moral philosophy has meant that for centuries ethicists have considered that such a view does make sense; and the question as to whether this is correct is, of course, the central topic in the debate between deontologists and
teleologists. My position, [and, I think, Aquinas' and Aristotle's position], is that it does not make sense to hold that right, [rectitude in action], is or can be independent of good, [the non-deliberate ends which define human well-being which nature's teleology directs human beings to pursue in all their deliberate behaviour, and from which such behaviour itself arises].

My position is that the rectitude of an action, [what "morally ought" or is morally right], always depends at least in part upon the action's conduciveness to human ends or goods, and I think that it is clear that Aquinas does also. A law, or moral precept, he says, is a "promulgated ordinance of reason directing action to the common good", [italics added], it is not merely a promulgated ordinance of reason directing action; it is no law, he says, unless it directs action to the common good, and the latter he defines in terms of precisely those ends to which nature's teleology direct us.

The alternative view, that rectitude in action can be determined independently of those non-deliberate ends which actions ultimately pursue, is nonsensical. Deliberate actions, by definition, aim at deliberate ends, [goods], and as said, the pursuit of deliberate ends presupposes ends which are not deliberate, [again, since all willing presupposes prior knowledge of some end]. Actions are thus defined as end-driven: they are deliberately end-driven movements. To argue that action can be right or wrong independently of what is good, [i.e., independently
of their conduciveness to the non-deliberate ends to which they are directed by natural teleology, and for the sake of which all deliberate ends are pursued], is thus to argue that rectitude in action is somehow independent of that which defines action, and this makes no sense. It makes no sense precisely because the deliberate ends which people pursue when they act are derived from their natural orientation to the pursuit of non-deliberate ends, and governed by principles which are grounded solely in this orientation.

Simply put, arguing that the directives to ends supplied by natural teleology have no bearing on the rectitude of deliberate human behaviour is analogous to arguing that the actions of a carpenter qua carpenter, which are, by definition, ultimately and necessarily directed toward the end of building the artifacts suited to carpentry, can be right or wrong actions relative to the craft of carpentry independently of their conduciveness in relation to the quality building of such artifacts.

Thus, in answer to the question of why it is morally right for people to do what they ought to do as prescribed by nature's teleology is that since all human actions are directed at the ends determined by this teleology, and governed by principles grounded in this directive, and since the rectitude of an action depends upon its conformity to the principles which govern it, [i.e., the conduciveness of the deliberate end it pursues in relation to an end which is non-deliberate, an end which is objectively and "commonly good"], it follows that it is morally right for people
to do what is prescribed by nature's teleology. In other words, since what is right is determined by what is good, and what is good is determined by nature's teleology, [the non-deliberate ends to which nature directs us, and which ground the principles which are the starting points of all deliberation and action], then right is determined by nature's teleology.

The latter point stands despite the fact that it implies that the most basic principles of morality are principles governing human action which people are not free to abide by or not. St. Thomas' point is that underlying all deliberate behaviour are natural directives to the pursuit of non-deliberate ends,74 and that when rationally formalized, these directives constitute the natural law.75 He holds that people are directed by the natural law in all that they do deliberately; it governs all action.76 In other words, human beings cannot deliberately cease pursuing the ends to which the natural law directs them.77

However, as seen in Section Three, human beings are completely free with regard to how well they pursue such ends, and the rectitude of their actions is determined primarily with reference to this factor.77 Specific proximate moral precepts, [i.e., specific prescriptions for right conduct], are derived from the most basic moral principles supplied by the natural law, and are justified insofar as they are directives which either prescribe those actions conducive to the non-deliberate ends ordained by the natural law, or insofar as they forbid those actions least conducive to, or obstructive of such ends. And

-195-
needless to say, human beings are completely free to abide or not abide by such specific precepts.

To return to the analogy cited previously, just as a carpenter qua carpenter does not deliberate about the ultimate end of building those artifacts suitable to carpentry, but about the means to these ends, so too a human being qua human does not deliberate about those ends which constitute the ultimate objects of human pursuit, but about the means to these ends. Furthermore, just as the specific guidelines directing the actions of a carpenter qua carpenter, and determining the rectitude of his or her actions, are derived from the non-deliberate end of carpentry in such a way that they either prescribe those actions most conducive to this end, or forbid those least conducive to or obstructive of it, so too the specific guidelines directing the actions of a human being qua human, and determining the rectitude of his or her actions, are derived from the non-deliberate ends of human beings in such a way that they either prescribe those actions most conducive to this end or forbid those actions least conducive to or obstructive of it. Finally, just as a carpenter qua carpenter is completely free with regard to whether or how well he or she abides by the specific guidelines directing the craft of carpentry, and behaves rightly and is a good carpenter to the extent that he or she does abide by them, a human being qua human is completely free with regard to whether or how well he or she abides by the specific guidelines directing human action, [or
the craft of living a human life, and behaves rightly or is a
good human being to the extent that he or she abides by them.

It seems, then, that natural teleology not only implies that
nature is normative or prescriptive, but also that a specifically
human natural teleology implies moral norms or oughts. From this
it can be concluded that if St. Thomas validly demonstrates that
nature is teleological, it will be possible for him to deduce
normative principles from nature without committing the
naturalistic fallacy.

The latter point demands that I now answer the very first of
the questions raised above: Does St. Thomas provide a valid
argument showing that nature is teleological? Having demonstrated
that a teleological nature implies not only a normative nature,
but also naturally deducible moral norms, the answer to such a
question is critical. It is also critical that I proceed with the
utmost care in my explication of this answer, for as the example
of SNLT attests, it is easily misconstrued.

The latter theory appears to grasp only the surface of the
central thesis of St. Thomas' naturalism, and consequently,
supplies but a hollow shadow of it. As seen, SNLT argues that
nature is normative, and the basis for moral norms, simply because
God created it: as the author of creation, what He demands that it
should be is implied in what He makes it. Such an argument is
invalid for several reasons. Not only, as Grisez points out, does
it presuppose without demonstrating that what God commands ought
to be obeyed; it makes an even more serious error. That God
created nature in and of itself does not entail that He demands that it should be anything more than what, in fact, He made it. In other words, by itself, God's act of creating nature does not imply anything about what He intends regarding future contingents, or what, if anything, He intends nature to become, only what He intends it to be.

For instance, that God created human beings with the power to reason entails only that He intends that we have this power, not that we "act rationally". While it might seem odd for someone to make something with a particular power or capability, and even an inclination to use it, without intending that it actually be used, this is not impossible. People do it all the time: auto-makers construct cars which can travel at speeds far faster than is safe and than the law permits; and they advertise that the cars are more desirable as a consequence. And yet one can presume that they do not intend that people actually operate their vehicles at such speeds. Furthermore, God makes people capable not only of so-called virtuous or rational behavior, but also vicious or irrational behavior. Why should we think that only the realization of the former capabilities and not the latter are divinely sanctioned? Indeed, why should we think that the realization of any natural capabilities or potentialities are sanctioned by God?

The answer to such a question lies in St. Thomas' argument that nature is teleological. It is this argument which SNLT completely overlooks, and which Grisez is misled by SNLT into misconstruing. Simply put, Aquinas shows that God's act of
creating nature not only causes it to be, but inclines it to become: i.e. to realize what it can be. In other words, St. Thomas demonstrates that in creating nature, God necessarily directs it to an end, and this end is God Himself. The argument which facilitates this demonstration, although complex, is really quite straightforward, and can be systematized according to the following steps:

Step 1. The argument begins with the doctrine of the species. As seen, this doctrine is ultimately grounded in the fact that whatever God creates must be a finite form imitable of His Nature. God must have in mind what He creates, since He creates deliberately; the ideas or templates for His creatures must be logically prior to their being created. But since the Divine Simplicity cannot admit of the possibility of a plurality of ideas distinct from Himself in the mind of God, God knows what He creates as He knows Himself - precisely as finite forms imitable of His Nature.

Step 2. The latter point implies that God's end in creating is the manifestation of Himself in finite form. In fact, the only logical end of His creating can be Himself, for otherwise His Absolute Simplicity would be compromised [although creation is not necessary, that God wills Himself to be is, if He wills at all].

Step 3. Therefore, God is the end of creation, i.e. creation is, by definition, directed to manifest God's Nature in finite form.

Step 4. As the end of all creation, God is the good of all creation, [in the generic sense of goodness in which the term good simply denotes an end or final cause].

Step 5. To ask why creation ought to pursue this end is redundant. Since it is entailed by God's creative act, that such an end ought to be pursued is the most basic prescription of that act which is made manifest in, or imprinted upon creation. In other words, to be created is, by definition, to be directed to this end. Furthermore, creation is directed to this end of necessity; to ask why
that which is of necessity ought to be is redundant." To ask, subsequently, why God Himself ought to will such an end, i.e. why He ought to regard Himself as good, [as though there is a normative principle over and above God, by which He is directed to value Himself], is also redundant. Insofar as God has a Will, [and it follows that He must have one, since He creates]," it follows that His Will must be in act, [since God is Pure Act], and from this it follows that He must will Himself, [since to will anything else would be to compromise the Divine Simplicity ]."5

Step 6. Since God is Pure Act, or Necessary Being," and since He is the good or end of all creation, [meaning that creation is, by definition, directed to manifest God's nature in finite form], it follows that all creatures are, by definition, directed to the complete being or actuality of the finite form they bear. For it is to the extent to which they are actual or in being that they imitate God's Nature as Necessary Being or Pure Act.

Step 7. Any creatures made by God in the manner of matter/form composites [i.e. any natural or physical substances]," will, of course, bear certain natural potentialities arising from this composition, [for matter is potential, and form individuated by a matter limits its pure potentiality to specific active potencies]."8 Such creatures, as directed to imitate or manifest God's nature in finite form, and so as directed to complete being or actuality, will therefore be inclined to the full actualization of the potencies specified by their form. The full actualization of those potencies will mean the full actualization of the nature of those creatures, and hence, the fulfillment of the end to which they are directed precisely as creatures.

Step 8. Within the whole scheme of creation, human beings are, of course, matter/form composites - natural substances. Consequently, they have specific potencies: those which distinguish them as natural per se, as organic, as sensitive, and ultimately as rational, i.e. as specifically human."9 Since all natural substances as creatures are, by definition, directed to the full actualization of the natural potencies they bear as natural substances of a specific kind, then so too are human beings. Hence, the natural inclinations which human beings bear are explained with reference to their status as creatures directed to the realization of natural potencies. Consequently, the human end is to fully realize these potencies.

Step 9. And yet human beings, unlike other natural
substances, do not merely move by nature or instinct toward the realization of their natural potencies, [the end to which they are inclined as creatures which are, by definition, prescribed or directed to imitate God in finite form]. Rather, human beings are naturally capable of deliberate action, of ordering their own movements in response to this directive or prescription. But to do so, they must be aware of the directive, at least in its proximate form relative to their specific end, for again, there is no willing or deliberate conduct without prior knowledge. Furthermore, since deliberation or practical reasoning is itself a natural human power or potency, [specific to the human form], like all of their natural potencies, people must be naturally inclined, as creatures directed to imitate God’s Nature as Pure Act, to its realization. But practical reasoning is actualized in the understanding and the attainment through action of what ought to be: i.e. its object is the good. As a result, if practical reasoning is naturally oriented or directed to actualization, then it must be pre-disposed to the good, directed or oriented to its pursuit; for it is the obtainment of the good with actualizes or completes practical reason. There must, therefore, be at least an intuitive or natural awareness of the good, and the prescription that it is to be achieved, within the operation of practical reason itself. In other words, practical reasoning must be governed by certain principles directing it to that which is its end: the attainment of the human good. These principles must, as it were, be self-evident to practical reason; it must be naturally aware of them, since they are directives to its natural end. It is these principles, as ordinances of reason directing action, which comprise the natural law.

It is via the latter argument that St. Thomas employs a naturalistic approach to proving the objectivity of ethics which is quite unlike that of SNLT, and also avoids the deficiencies of that theory. The argument shows how and why nature is teleological, i.e. that it is, by definition, directed to an end, and what exactly this end involves. This illustration implies, of course, that there is prescriptiveness or normativity implicit in nature; and it explains why in human nature in particular, this normativity is expressed in the form of self-evident and naturally
known principles directing the operation of practical reason which
governs moral conduct."

That the whole of such an argument is truly philosophical and
valid is a question to be answered in Section Five of this
discussion, where I will address its main presuppositions,
especially those relating to the existence of God, His Nature as
Pure Act, and His status as Creator. The present point is simply
that given that it is philosophical, the argument validly
circumvents the naturalistic fallacy: from the first step in its
line of reasoning, all the rest logically follow.

Germain Grisez is mistaken, then, not only in his view that
to interpret Aquinas as a naturalist is to subscribe to the
position of SNLT, but also in his view that there is no naturalism
in Thomistic ethics, and that any naturalistic ethic, Thomistic or
otherwise, is doomed to be invalid. For unless there is a threat
to naturalism more compelling than the naturalistic fallacy, the
position of Aquinas is beyond reproach: he shows that nature is
teleological, and thus, that there is normativity implicit in
nature, from which it follows that the normative can be deduced
from nature. In the process, he also shows why people must be
naturally aware of certain basic normative principles directing
all action.

Unfortunately, the latter point raises the specter of a
potential difficulty confronting my interpretation of the true
naturalism of Thomistic ethics. I have confessed that I agree with
Grisez that according to Aquinas, the principles of practical
reason are self-evident and naturally known; after all, he explicitly says this, and it is also supported by the naturalistic arguments which I described above.

But the question then arises: if the principles are self-evident and naturally known, [a position which serves as the basis for a non-naturalistic interpretation of Aquinas], why do we need the naturalism? Is it not redundant? There may be a naturalistic argument in Thomistic ethics, and it may be valid, but so what? Such an argument itself shows that human beings must have a natural awareness or intuition of basic normative principles; why, then, do we need a naturalistic argument by which to deduce them? Indeed, if it can be shown independently of any naturalism, as Grisez has argued, that there are normative principles inherent in practical reasoning, what purpose does a naturalistic argument serve?

The answers to such questions lie in the fact that the naturalism of Aquinas plays a very critical role in his overall demonstration that normative ethics is legitimate science, i.e. that it has both an objective and universal subject matter. And Grisez appears to overlook this fact as well.

* * * *

(v). Grisez's Ultimate Mistake: The Need for Naturalism

As I stated in Section One, to establish the legitimacy of moral science, one must prove that it has a legitimate subject
matter, which means proving that there are such things as objective and universal normative principles. However, the non-naturalism of Aquinas, as described by Germain Grisez does not suffice to establish the existence of such principles. At first glance, this statement might seem odd. After all, if the principles of practical reasoning are truly self-evident and naturally known, how can it be argued that they are not objective and universal? The truth of self-evident principles does not depend upon people's beliefs and feelings; such principles certainly cannot be doubted. And if the principles are indeed implicit in the operation of practical reasoning, what more is required to show that they are grasped universally?

In fact, only one of the principles of practical reason is self-evident in the manner which St. Thomas says is characteristic of a truly self-evident proposition. And only this principle can truly be said to be intrinsic to practical reasoning. I am, of course, referring to the first principle of practical reason: "the good is to be done and pursued and evil is to be avoided".

But this principle is too general to serve as the foundation for a science of normative ethics; as seen, it merely disposes people to the pursuit of ends; it does not show how and why they are objectively disposed to pursue the same ends. The other principles of practical reason, which do supply it with specific ends, while naturally known, are not intrinsic to practical reasoning in the same manner as the FPPR. Nor, strictly speaking, are such principles truly self-evident. And it is for these
reasons that the naturalism of Thomistic ethics is necessary for proving that ethics has a subject matter which admits of objectivity and universality. St. Thomas' own arguments and, ironically, Grisez's interpretation of them, both support the latter view, as the following will explain.

As seen, practical reasoning is, by definition, goal-oriented or end-driven. And as also seen, the generic sense of goodness simply denotes that the good is an end or goal. From this it follows that since practical reasoning is goal-oriented, it is intrinsic to the operation of practical reasoning that what is good, [i.e. what is an end], is to be pursued and done, and that what is evil, [i.e. what is the contrary of an end], is to be avoided. It also follows from the generic sense of goodness that the FPPR is a truly self-evident proposition.

In my critique of the naturalism of Kretzmann and Stump, I stated that according to Aquinas, a self-evident proposition is one in which the subject term contains the concept of the predicate term. This is clearly the case with the FPPR. The latter is really a conjunction of two propositions: [1]. Good is to be done and pursued, and [2]. Evil is to be avoided. As Aquinas states, "good has the notion of an end, evil of the contrary", [which conveys, of course, the generic senses of good and evil respectively]. Thus, the subject terms of the two propositions comprising the FPPR can be paraphrased as: "an end", and "the contrary of an end". To this analysis may be added the view that the predicate terms of those propositions are, respectively: "to
be done and pursued" and "to be avoided". The result is that the FPPR can be accurately paraphrased as stating: [1]. "An end is to be pursued and done", and [2]. "The contrary of an end is to be avoided".

Needless to say, the subject terms in such propositions contain the concepts of the predicate terms, rendering the propositions strictly self-evident. This is because whatever is "to be pursued and done" is, by definition, "an end". And whatever is "to be avoided" is, by definition, the "contrary of an end". Hence, the FPPR is not only, as shown above, intrinsic to the operation of practical reasoning, it is also truly self-evident. And needless to say, such qualities entail that the FPPR is objective and universal.

Given that the FPPR is intrinsic to the operation of practical reasoning, it follows that every human being who engages in deliberate behavior, and so utilizes practical reasoning, is directed by, and thus naturally aware of the FPPR." Furthermore, given that the FPPR is strictly self-evident, it follows that it is objectively and certainly true: i.e. that it cannot be doubted, and that people's beliefs and feelings have no bearing on its truth-value.

But the same cannot be said of the other principles of practical reasoning which are derived from the FPPR, those which direct people to specific ends. Although naturally known, such principles are not intrinsic to the operation of practical reasoning; and they are not strictly self-evident. And this means
that much more is required to show that these principles are also objective and universal.

The secondary or subsequent principles of practical reasoning [SPPR], as seen, are derived not only from the FPPR, but from people's natural inclinations. As both Aquinas and Grisez explain, insofar as the FPPR directs practical reason to the pursuit of ends, the SPPR are naturally formed as a consequence of the specific ends presented to reason by natural human inclinations. Practical reason naturally regards these ends as those to which it is directed by the FPPR, because these are the only ends of which reason is made aware. The latter point can be used to explain how and why people can be said to intuit or enjoy a natural awareness of the SPPR.

Since people are naturally aware of the FPPR, as this is implicit in the operation of practical reasoning itself; since the FPPR directs reason to pursue ends; and since people are naturally aware of the objects or ends of their natural inclinations; it follows that they intuit or naturally apprehend such ends as those to which they are directed by the FPPR. And thus, people naturally formulate subsequent principles of practical reason which direct it to the pursuit of the ends of their natural inclinations - the SPPR.

What the latter account implies, however, is that the SPPR are neither intrinsic to the operation of practical reasoning, and nor, strictly speaking, are they comprised of self-evident propositions. The SPPR are not intrinsic to the operation of
practical reasoning, as is the FPPR, since the former depend upon those ends presented to practical reasoning by natural human inclinations. Unless natural human inclinations present to practical reason specific ends, the SPPR will not be formed. Hence, they are formed as the consequence of a factor extrinsic to practical reasoning: viz., the existence of natural human inclinations."

For similar reasons, the SPPR cannot be said to be comprised of strictly self-evident propositions, as is the case with the FPPR. To reiterate, a proposition is truly self-evident if its subject term contains the concept of its predicate term. This was shown to be true of the propositions comprising the FPPR. But it is not true of the propositions comprising the SPPR.

For example, according to Aquinas, people have a natural inclination to self-preservation, and so the SPPR includes the normative proposition "Self-preservation is to be pursued." This proposition is not strictly self-evident; the subject term, "self-preservation" does not contain the concept of the predicate term, "to be pursued". Of course, practical reason naturally apprehends that self-preservation is to be pursued because it is the object of a natural human inclination, which means that it is naturally apprehended by practical reason as an end, and an end, by definition, is something "to be pursued", as prescribed by the FPPR.

Of course, the latter point explains what St. Thomas means
when he states that the SPPR are self-evident to practical reason. The SPPR, which propose that the objects of natural inclinations are to be pursued, are not self-evident in themselves. However, they come to be regarded as self-evident by practical reason; they are ostensibly self-evident. This is because the subject terms of the propositions comprising the SPPR are all naturally apprehended by reason as ends, since they all refer to the objects of natural human inclinations; and the predicate terms of the propositions comprising the SPPR all contain the concept of an end, since they all prescribe that the subjects are "to be pursued"; and again, whatever has the quality of something to be pursued is, by definition, an end.

Hence, it is only because their subject terms refer to the objects of natural human inclinations that the propositions comprising the SPPR come to be regarded by practical reason as self-evident. This fact, coupled with the fact, as already shown, that the SPPR are intuited or formed by practical reasoning only because they are founded in natural human inclinations, implies that to show that such principles are objective and universal requires much more than that which is required in the case of the FPPR.

As seen, the latter principle, which simply disposes people to pursue ends, is objective and universal both because it is intrinsic to the operation of practical reasoning itself, and because it is strictly self-evident. But it has been shown that
the SPPR, which prescribe the specific ends which practical reason is to pursue, are not intrinsic to its operation, because their formation depends upon the extrinsic factor of specific natural human inclinations. Nor, strictly speaking, are such principles self-evident; again, it is only through the mitigation of specific natural human inclinations that practical reason comes to regard them as such.

As a result, the SPPR cannot be shown to be objective and universal in the same manner as the FPPR. Rather, because the SPPR are both formed within practical reason, and regarded by it as self-evident, as a consequence of specific natural human inclinations, it follows that the objectivity and universality of the SPPR depend upon the objectivity and universality of precisely these inclinations. And it is for this reason that the non-naturalism of Aquinas upon which Grisez focuses his efforts, does not suffice to establish the legitimacy of moral science; and why St. Thomas' naturalism is needed for this task.

Indeed, from what has been said above, it is clear that only if specific natural human inclinations are objective and universal does it follow that the SPPR are objective and universal. Only if all people really have specific natural inclinations, i.e., if such inclinations objectively exist, and if all people have the same inclinations, will it follow that there exists an objective set of SPPR which are the same for all people, and thus, a legitimate subject matter for normative ethics.

But how, then, does one show that natural human inclinations
are objective and universal? Can it be argued that people are naturally or intuitively aware that this is the case? Certainly not, since such a position would require that people are somehow able to intuit not only that others have such inclinations, but that these are the same as their own! It may be argued in reply to the latter point that people do not need to intuit what is readily apparent in their experience with others. After all, one can observe as a matter of experience that other people appear to engage in deliberate actions like oneself, [which implies that they also appear to pursue ends]; and one can observe that people also appear to pursue ends similar to one's own.

But such an approach is seriously deficient. First, it only conveys what is apparently the case, not what is actually the case. Secondly, the fact that people often vehemently disagree about which ends are worth pursuing undermines the argument from experience that they are all inclined, in fact, to pursue the same ends. Finally, even if it can be shown, as a matter of experience, that people pursue the same ends, this does not imply that those ends have any objective basis. Such universality does not imply objectivity; people may pursue the same ends merely as a matter of convention. In other words, the observation that other people pursue ends which are similar to one's own does not entail that this pursuit springs from any objective and universal inclinations in them.

Proving that such natural inclinations exist, and demonstrating what they involve requires, then, more than merely
observing how people behave. This is because the view that there exist objective and universal natural human inclinations presupposes that there is something objective and universal about human beings: i.e. that human beings are objectively the same in some way precisely because they are human. And such a view also presupposes how and why the fact that people are objectively the same implies that they are naturally inclined to the same ends. In other words, the view that such inclinations exist presupposes both that there is an objective and universal human nature, and how and why from this nature there arise certain inclinations which are objectively the same for all people.

As a result, demonstrating that natural human inclinations are objective and universal means that one must first demonstrate the truth of such presuppositions. And from this it follows that one must ultimately subscribe to a naturalistic approach for establishing the legitimacy of a science of ethics. Why? Because if one must utilize theoretical knowledge concerning human nature, and how and why certain inclinations naturally arise from it, in order to prove that such universal and objective inclinations exist; And if one must further utilize, as seen above, the existence of these inclinations in order to prove that there also exist objective and universal normative principles, [i.e. the SPPR], directing the operation of practical reason in all people to the pursuit of the same specific ends, then one must, by definition, employ a naturalistic approach to prove the objectivity and universality of such normative principles. And
needless to say, this is precisely the approach employed by St. Thomas.

As seen previously, Aquinas provides an argument which shows why there exists an objective and universal human nature, and how and why from this nature there naturally arise certain inclinations objectively the same in all people. He argues that since people are created by God, a number of conclusions relevant to normative ethics follow.

First, it follows that there is a Divine Idea or Exemplar of human nature logically prior to His creative act, whereby human nature objectively represents one of an infinite variety of finite forms imitable of the Divine Nature. Secondly, it follows that like all creatures, human beings are, by definition, directed necessarily to manifest God's Nature as Pure Act in finite form. This means that they are directed necessarily to realize the potencies specific to their nature, which means that they are objectively and universally inclined by nature to the realization of these potencies. Finally, it follows that there must exist in human beings, as rational creatures capable of deliberate action, and as directed to reason practically, a set of naturally known normative principles, [the principles of practical reasoning or the natural law], by which they are directed to deliberately act in accordance with the ends toward which they are naturally inclined as creatures which are, by definition, directed necessarily to imitate God.

To object that such a naturalistic argument does not, in
fact, reflect St. Thomas' strategy for proving that moral science is viable, and subsequently, that he did not recognize the need for a valid naturalism to accomplish this end, is ultimately to contradict arguments which are explicitly made by him. The strongest evidence supporting the latter fact is to be found once again in his "Treatise on Law".

In St. I-II. 91. 2, where St. Thomas seeks to prove that there exists such a thing as natural law, [i.e. that there actually exist objective and universal normative principles which are naturally known by all people], he does not proceed as he does in St. I-II. 93., where his aim is to uncover what the natural law involves, having shown that it exists. Indeed, Aquinas does not argue in the former article that the natural law exists because a natural operation of practical reason exists, which is, by definition, goal-oriented, from which it follows that there must also exist a principle implicit in its operation directing it to the pursuit of goals. Nor does he argue that natural law exists because insofar as there is a principle directing practical reason to the pursuit of goals, subsequent principles which direct practical reason are formed from the goals implied by natural human inclinations.

Rather, in ST. I-II. 91. 2., when St. Thomas sets out to prove that there is a natural law, he explicitly argues on the basis of eternal law and Divine providence:

I answer that... since all things subject to the Divine providence are ruled and measured by the eternal law...it is
evident that all things partake somewhat of the eternal law, insofar as, namely, from its being imprinted on them, they derive their respective inclinations to their proper acts and ends. Now among all others, the rational creature is subject to Divine providence in the most excellent way, insofar as it partakes of a share of providence, by being provident both for itself and for others. Wherefore, it has a share of the Eternal Reason, whereby it has a natural inclination to its proper act and end: and this participation of the eternal law in the rational creature is called the natural law.

In other words, Aquinas cites as the foundation for the objective existence of natural law, the eternal law and Eternal Reason of God, and Divine providence. This clearly points to the fact that St. Thomas does indeed employ a "metaphysics of divine causality" in his approach to normative ethics.

And contrary to the position of Germain Grisez, not only has it been shown that the principal argument underlying the latter approach avoids the naturalistic fallacy, and not only was it demonstrated that it serves as the foundation for the non-naturalism of Thomistic ethics; but as seen, it has also been proven that such an argument is absolutely necessary for establishing the objectivity and universality of normative principles. Consequently, what remains to be examined is the validity of what I have identified as the main presupposition underlying such an argument - the philosophical creationism of Aquinas, and whether it truly bears the ethical implications which Aquinas assigns to it.

* * * * * * * *
Section 5: God, Creation, and Morality

Perhaps the most important fact to note at the outset of an inquiry into the philosophic character and overall validity of the naturalism of Thomistic ethics is that at least two-thirds of that moral theory follows the same structure as Aristotle's. For one thing, and as already pointed out, Aquinas' moral theory is, like Aristotle's, teleological; it is based upon the view that insofar as normative ethics is concerned with the right and wrong of human action, [as opposed to the "acts of a human being"], and human action is, by definition, concerned with ends, normative ethics is also concerned with ends.

Furthermore, St. Thomas reasons, like Aristotle, that as teleological, a science of normative ethics depends upon the existence of an objective and universal ultimate goal of human life, since the latter would serve as the first principle of such a science. Aquinas agrees with Aristotle's demonstration that insofar as human action is, by definition, goal-oriented, it must seek an ultimate goal, or an end pursued purely for its own sake, and for nothing further, since an infinite regress of ends or final causes contradicts the goal orientation which is definitive of human action.

Aristotle holds that such a goal is, by definition, "self-sufficient and complete". According to Aquinas, this means that the ultimate goal of a human being or human life must "leave
nothing more to be desired". In other words, there can be nothing which a human being pursues beyond this goal, and it must include the sum of all which a human being pursues for its own sake. Hence, as stated previously, the moral philosophy of Aquinas is, like Aristotle's, eudaimonistic: it holds that a human being pursues an ultimate goal which completes that human being, wholly fulfils him or her.

As a result, in his effort to isolate an objective and universal ultimate human goal, Aquinas largely follows Aristotle's example; he concludes that if such a goal exists it must be that which completes a human being qua human. In other words, Aquinas hypothesizes that the objective and universal nature of such a goal must be derived, as Aristotle holds, from what is objective and universal about human beings: i.e. from human nature.

But in order to prove such an hypothesis, Aquinas recognizes, as did Aristotle, that it is not enough simply to define human nature and isolate that which would complete a human being qua human; it must be shown that human beings qua human are directed to pursue that which completes them. Only then would it follow that what objectively and universally completes a human being qua human also comprises the objective and universal ultimate goal of human life. Indeed, unless they are shown to comprise the ultimate human goal, the contents of what is natural to a human being, or what would complete a human
being qua human, are irrelevant to normative ethics.

How, then, does one show that human beings are by nature directed to pursue that which objectively and universally completes them qua human?

For Aquinas, like Aristotle, the answer lies in showing that human beings qua human are functional, or more specifically, that they are directed of necessity to perform a characteristic task the capacity for which defines their nature: a characteristic task which thus completes or realizes what it means to be human. Aristotle holds that eudaimonia is something toward which human beings are naturally inclined or directed. Furthermore, he defines the essence of eudaimonia as the performance of the human function or ergon, which is nothing other than the realization of natural human capacities, primarily the capacity which constitutes the specific differentia of human nature. Thus, his approach to proving that there exists an objective and universal ultimate human good revolves around proving the existence of such a direction and such a function.

Generally speaking, Aquinas agrees with the latter views, and the latter approach. However, outside of his Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics, he rarely speaks in terms of a human function or ergon, and a natural direction or orientation to its performance in human beings. Rather, Aquinas ultimately speaks in terms of a natural law operative in human beings.
divergence from the Aristotelian terminology is no coincidence; it is a testament to how the Thomistic argument for the existence of an objective and universal ultimate human goal diverges from its Aristotelian counterpart. Nevertheless, this Thomistic argument is rooted, first and foremost, like that of Aristotle, in the latter's philosophy of nature. 

First of all, as suggested previously, Aquinas accepts Aristotle's hylomorphic account of the changing and plural world which human beings experience, an account which attempts to show how such a world is possible or how it can be real. Furthermore, St. Thomas adopts Aristotle's position regarding how existence in this world, as intimated by the contents of human experience, and consistent with his theory of hylomorphism, is divisible into the substantial and the accidental. In other words, Aquinas advocates Aristotle's view that the world is composed of substantial and accidental forms individuated in matter which result in actual individual matter/form composites, [i.e. natural substances], and that these substances are divisible into specific kinds and bear both specific and nonspecific characteristics. And Aquinas also advocates Aristotle's view that these natural substances undergo both substantial and accidental changes.

Finally, St. Thomas fully sanctions the Aristotelian argument that a substantial form is the entelecheia or first actuality of a natural substance, placing it into its specific
class, and serving as an internal principle of change within it by determining the indeterminate pure potentiality of Prime Matter into specific active potencies, or dunameis, which both define a natural substance, and dispose it to specific second actualities, or energeiai.16

There appears to be complete common ground, then, between Aristotle and Aquinas regarding how human beings are a distinct natural kind defined by specific human capacities which dispose them to specific human activities. There is also complete common ground between Aristotle and Aquinas regarding what these specific human capacities and their corresponding activities involve:17 [1].The nutritive and reproductive capacity corresponding to the activities of nutrition and reproduction, [2].The locomotive capacity corresponding to the activity of locomotion, [3].The sensitive capacity corresponding to the activity of sensation, and the specific differentia of human nature, [4].The rational capacity corresponding to the activity of reason or thought. And of course, both philosophers agree that human beings are by nature directed to fully realize these capacities, or to perform these activities, and consequently, that this realization or performance is the objective and universal ultimate goal of human life.18

However, it is in their respective arguments for proving how and why such a goal exists, and how and why human beings are by nature directed to fully realize their specific human
capacities, or to perform specific human activities, that a significant difference emerges between Aristotle and Aquinas.

Inspired on the one hand by Christian revelation, which holds that the objectivity and universality of moral principles ultimately have their source in God, the end of all creation, and on the other hand, by Aristotle's philosophical position that nature is teleological, and that its ultimate end is to imitate the Pure Actuality of the Prime Mover, whom, he says, represents the primary sense of goodness in reality, Aquinas sets out to demonstrate explicitly the correlation between metaphysics and ethics. More specifically, Aquinas sets out to explain not only how a desire to imitate God's Pure Actuality is necessarily the source of human action, directing human beings to fully realize their natural capacities, but also, and more importantly, that human beings desire of necessity to imitate God's Pure Actuality, which means that they act as a consequence of being directed of necessity to fully realize their natural potencies.

Aquinas does so by departing from, or developing Aristotelianism in a radical way, and formulating a valid argument inconceivable to Aristotle: an argument which shows that Aristotle's Prime Mover or God is not only the final cause of all change in the natural world, but nature's efficient cause as its Creator or arche of being.

* * * * *
I stated previously that Aquinas accepts from Aristotle the theory that existence in nature is divisible into the substantial and the accidental: i.e. substantial and accidental forms individuated in matter resulting in actual discrete or independent matter/form composites of specific kinds bearing both specific and nonspecific attributes. It would, however, have been more precise if I had stated that Aquinas generally accepts such a theory, for specifically his position is somewhat different from that of Aristotle.

The Philosopher regards a substantial form as the principle of being or actuality in a natural substance, since it is the extent to which the latter bears such a form that it exists or is actual as an independent and discrete matter/form composite of a specific kind. Aquinas, however, amends this view. Strictly speaking, he argues that a substantial form is the principle of being or actuality only of a specific kind, not of being or actuality itself. Aristotle makes no distinction between the principle of being or actuality of a specific kind, and the principle of being or actuality itself: he holds that both pertain to the substantial form of a natural substance. But Aquinas recognizes that Aristotle is mistaken in this regard.

Since a substantial form, [ousia], relates to the quiddity or essence of a natural substance, placing it into its specific
class, i.e. since a substantial form determines what the natural substance is specifically or essentially, [what it must be in order to be a substance of a specific kind], Aquinas concludes that a substantial form cannot be the principle of being or actuality itself in relation to that substance. And it is St. Thomas' argument supporting this conclusion, his argument that being and essence are really distinct in natural substances, which simultaneously serves as the basis not only for his most compelling philosophical demonstration that God exists, but also that God is the Creator of the natural world, and of everything in it.

In Chapter 4 of his early work De Ente et Essentia, Aquinas shows that being and essence are really distinct in all substances, insofar as these admit in any way of contingency by way of finitude, multiplicity, or potency. According to John Wippel, such a demonstration is based upon the following argument.:

**Premise 1:** Multiplicity follows either from adding a specific difference, [as a generic nature is multiplied into several species], or from the individuation of matter, or from participation.

**Premise 2:** If there is a Being whose "essence is being", it can only exist in one instance, since it can be neither material, [or else it will potentially change or not be], nor exist by participation, [or else it will be contingent and so not exist necessarily], nor admit the addition of a difference, since it must be infinite, [for the finite is contingent upon what it is limited by], and thus, already includes all differences.
Conclusion: Therefore, there must be a real distinction between being and essence in all other beings, or in those beings which are either material, multiple, contingent, or finite.

In the first premise, St. Thomas defines how something can be multiplied: [1]. By adding a difference; e.g. by adding rationality to the genus "animal", this genus is thus multiplied into the species human [the rational] and non-rational animals; [2]. By different parts of matter receiving the same form, e.g. the species human is multiplied in different individual humans, where each individual bears the same form or species but is materially separate; and [3]. By participation, e.g. the pot and the water in it which are sitting atop a stove's heat element are hot because they participate in the heat derived from the heat element, and so heat is multiplied in two numerically distinct entities.

In general, for there to be more than one thing of the same kind, there must exist some sort of difference between them, as is the case in each of the examples above. At the very least, a numerical distinction must be present between two or more things. If no such difference exists, then there is no multiplication; hence there would only be one thing. Having established this, St. Thomas subsequently demonstrates in the second premise that if there is a Being whose essence is being, it can only exist in one instance, i.e. it cannot admit of multiplicity. Such a premise is based upon the fact that a Being
whose essence is being would have a necessary existence.

In other words, to explain why a Being whose essence is being can only exist in one instance, it must first be shown that its existence is necessary, [or that it exists necessarily], and what follows upon a necessary existence. In general, something is necessary if: [1].It has to be the way it is; it cannot be otherwise; it must be; [2].It depends upon nothing else for its existence; [3].It is eternal as in everlasting. Conversely, something is contingent if: [1].It can admit of being otherwise; it does not have to be; [2].It depends upon something else; [3].It is temporal, destructible, or changeable. If something's essence is being, existence is, by definition, a necessary attribute of that thing. If existence is a necessary attribute, it follows that the thing has to be. This means that the thing cannot cease to be, [since it must be], nor be in any way other than the way it is, [since any change is the cessation of being in some respect, and the commencement of being in another respect], nor depend upon something else for its existence, [since this would mean that its existence follows from something else, and not from its own essence].

With the necessity of a Being whose essence is being thus established, it can now be shown why, as St. Thomas explains, it cannot be multiple in any way. First, such a being could not be multiple through the admission of a difference. By definition, a Being whose essence is being includes every possible difference,
as the following will illustrate.

A Being whose essence is being cannot be finite, since a finite entity is limited not by itself, [or else it is not really limited], but by something other than itself. A thing which is thus limited is contingent upon what limits it: i.e. its being is partly contingent upon that which limits it. However, as shown above, a Being whose essence is being can in no way be contingent, and since all finite things are contingent, such a being must be infinite. From this it follows that it lacks nothing, in which case it can admit of no difference that it does not already have. Simply put, as stated in Section Four, two infinite things cannot actually exist since each is lacking in nothing and there is no difference between them.

Secondly, a Being whose essence is being cannot be material, as matter is not only the principle of individuation, but also of potentiality.\(^5\) Material substances are, by definition, potential to change. However a Being whose essence is being cannot change in any way, since any change is a change in being, which would contradict the fact that its being is necessary.

Finally, such a Being cannot admit of multiplicity by way of participation. If some part of something's being is a result of participation, it is contingent upon that in which it participates. Once again, a Being whose essence is being, as
absolutely necessary, can be in no way contingent. Thus, it cannot be in any way by participation, since participating entities are contingent.

With the truth of its premises thus established, one can conclude that the argument from the De Ente et Essentia for the real distinction between being and essence in anything which is multiple, contingent, material, or finite is sound. And having proven that being and essence are therefore really distinct in natural substances, [as these are, by definition, multiple, contingent, material, and finite], Aquinas goes on to point out that this real distinction implies that being is received in all natural substances, and that it is received from God, or a Being whose essence is being, i.e. that God creates natural substances. As Joseph Owens argues, Aquinas shows that the act of being is prior to, and a "predicable accident" in all substances, which implies that it must be received from a Being whose essence is being: God, or a necessary and infinite being.

Since being is distinct from the essence of all finite, multiple, contingent or material beings, [which, of course, includes natural substances], it must enter into composition with that essence from outside. Why? Because, as Aquinas states:

Whatever belongs to a thing is either caused by the principles of its nature [as the capacity for laughter in man], or comes to it from an extrinsic principle, [as light in the air from the influence of the sun]. Now being itself cannot be caused by the form or quiddity of a thing [by 'caused' I mean by an efficient cause], because that thing
would then be its own cause and it would bring itself into being, which is impossible. It follows that everything whose being is distinct from its nature must have being from another."

In other words, where being is not essential to something, then the thing need not exist, and its being must be accidental to it, [as nonessential or unnecessary attributes borne by something are, by definition, accidental attributes].

More specifically, existence lies beyond the scope of the concept or definition of such a thing. But existence cannot be like other accidental attributes, [or predicates], i.e. those which Owens calls "predicamental", in that being cannot follow from the essence or definition of a thing like other accidental attributes do, [e.g. the nature of a human being is such that a human being must have a gender, but the actual gender of a human being is not included in the definition of a human being]. As Owens argues, if existence did follow or flow from the nature of a thing, the thing would have to exist before its own existence, which is patently absurd."

Therefore, where being is accidental or lies outside the essence or definition of a thing, being must be an accident which is prior to the essence and all other attributes of a thing, i.e. being must be a "predicable accident", for the essence and any attributes are nothing without being or existence. But this means that the being of such a thing must be
received from something outside the thing.

Why? Because the priority and accidentality of existence logically entail that there must be something with existence which is prior to that in which existence is not essential, and which is the source of the existence of such a thing. In other words, the act of existence in a thing whose existence is not necessary to it must be caused by, or have its source in something exterior to it. As the principle of non-contradiction states, "a thing cannot both be, and not be at the same time in the same respect"; to recognize that the existence of a thing whose existence is really distinct from its essence is accidental and prior, but then hold that the thing's existence is not caused is to defy this principle. For to say that the existence of a thing whose existence is not essential to it is not caused is equivalent to saying that being is not accidental and prior to that thing, i.e. that the existence of such a thing is essential, [i.e. that it exists necessarily, and so is uncaused], or that being somehow flows from its essence, both of which are contradictory. In other words, if the act of existence is both prior, [i.e. logically prior], and accidental to a thing, it is contradictory to assert that the source of that act is not extrinsic to such a thing, and so is caused.19

From the latter point it follows that being must therefore be received in something whose essence and existence are really distinct. It is for this reason that Aquinas further argues17:
that where being and essence are really distinct in an entity, they are related as act to potency, i.e. that being is the act by which such an entity exists, to which its essence stands in potency. This should not be misconstrued, of course, as signifying the absurd consequence that where existence and essence are really distinct in an entity, at one time the essence existed in potency to existence before receiving the act of existence! Rather, it should be construed as meaning that the essence and the act of existence in such a thing are contemporaneous in such a way that the essence is enacted by existence and inseparable from it, but not vice-versa, i.e. that the essence does not enact existence so that existence is inseparable from the essence.

Just as the movement of a man's hand when writing with a pen is contemporaneous with the movement of the pen, but logically prior to it, whereby the movement of the pen depends upon and is inseparable from the movement of the hand, and not vice-versa, so too in a thing whose essence and existence are really distinct, the act of existence is contemporaneous with the essence, but logically prior to it, whereby the essence depends upon and is inseparable from the act of existence, but not vice-versa. In other words, just as a hand moving a pen moves independently or separately from the pen, but not vice-versa, although their movements are contemporaneous, so too in a thing whose essence and being are really distinct, the act of existence is independent and separable from the essence, but not
vice-versa, although they are contemporaneous in the thing.

A proof for God's existence and status as the Creator of all contingent reality, including the natural world, follows from the latter point.\textsuperscript{34} As seen, where being is not essential it must be received or caused from outside, so that what receives it is dependent upon and inseparable from what causes it. This means that if a being actually exists whose essence and existence are really distinct, then it exists inseparably from or in complete dependence upon an act of existence logically prior to it. And this means that where being is not essential, it is not caused by or received from something which itself receives being. In itself, the latter is an insufficient cause or source of being, since it is dependent upon and inseparable from an act of existence logically prior to it. Simply put, existence cannot flow from such a thing per se, but flows from that act of existence logically prior to it and upon which it depends for being. In other words, what does not exist independently cannot cause being independently, [or be an independent source of being],\textsuperscript{15} just as what does not move independently cannot cause movement independently, [or be an independent source of movement]. And of course, multiplying such insufficient causes by infinity is no help; an infinite series of insufficient causes is still insufficient. More specifically, an infinite series of causes ordered to each other has no actual effect; it is just a series of intermediaries through which no

-231-
causal activity is borne."

Hence, if a being actually exists whose essence and being are really distinct, then it must receive being from, and so be dependant upon and inseparable from a Being whose essence and being are not really distinct: Necessary and Infinite Being, i.e. God. Only such a Being would exist independently, and so only such a being could be the sufficient cause of dependent being, the prior act of existence from which it is inseparable. And since, as shown, there is a real distinction between being and essence in all beings which are finite, contingent, multiple, or material, [which includes the natural world and all in it], it follows that the existence of such a world is caused by and depends upon a Being whose essence is being. This means that insofar as the natural world and all in it exist, it follows that God exists, and that He is the Creator, or source of being of the natural world, and indeed, of all reality other than God.

But how can God be the Creator, or the efficient cause or source of being in all reality? If God creates, is He not in potency to what He creates: i.e. does He not proceed from being potentially a Creator to being actually a Creator? And if so, does this not contradict His status as Necessary Being, which implies that God is Pure Act, and so wholly immutable, meaning that the nature of God's existence contradicts his status as Creator? Clearly, these questions must be answered before one
can proceed further and consider the implications which God's existence and status as Creator have on the pursuit of a legitimate science of normative ethics. In other words, philosophical creationism must be shown to be metaphysically sound before its impact on moral science can be demonstrated.

* * * *

[ii]. The Metaphysics of Philosophical Creationism

Aristotle argues that an efficient cause is in potency to its effects. Why? Because a cause is only potentially a cause until it has an actual effect; only when its effect is present to it, can it rightfully be said to be a cause. But when its effect is not present to it, [i.e. before it is effected or after the effect has ceased], the cause cannot be said to be actually causing, but to be in potency. since God, [i.e. the Prime Mover], as Pure Act can admit of no potency, Aristotle argues that God cannot be an efficient cause.

Aquinas responds to this argument in a twofold way.

First of all, St. Thomas points out that creation does not involve any change in the proper sense, as it lacks all the principles required for a change: an underlying subject, a form, and indeed, a privation. Simply put, nothing is being acted upon in creation, so nothing is being reduced from potency to act. A thing cannot be potentially existing, and through God's
creative act, rendered actually existing. Strictly speaking, this means that a potency is not being reduced to actuality in creation, so in that sense, creation does not involve a change in anything. From this it follows that since God's act of creation does not involve a change in anything, it does not imply a change in God.

Clearly, given that the effect of God's act of creation does not involve a change, or the reduction of a potency to act, it follows that such an effect is never in potency, but always actual relative to the act of creation. But a cause whose effect is never in potency relative to it, is a cause which is never in potency to its effect, or a cause which is never potentially a cause; as Aquinas states: "since creation is without movement, a thing is being created and is already created at the same time". Hence, God's act of creation is never in potency to the effect of that act.

Aquinas holds that if fully understood, the latter argument suffices as a rebuttal of the position that God's act of creation entails that He is in potency to what He creates, which would contradict His status as Pure Act. Nonetheless, St. Thomas recognizes that it is very difficult to fully understand such an argument, especially its premise that creation does not involve a change, for as Aquinas remarks, the "mode of signification follows the mode of understanding". His point is that it is difficult for the human mind to grasp the notion that the effect
of a cause need not involve a change, since all of the effects experienced by human beings do involve changes.

Furthermore, the actual existence of change itself makes it even more difficult to understand how God can be the source of all contingent existence, at least in the natural world, without being in potency to it. For if the natural world and all things in it change, and every change is a change in being, does it not follow that as the cause of being in the world, God's act of creation changes every time there is change in the world? Since, for example, God is the source of the existence of a human being who is sitting, and must continue to be the source of the existence of this human being when he ceases sitting and stands, [which is a change in the existence of this person], does it not follow that while the person is still sitting that God is only potentially the cause of the being of that person standing, and that this potentiality in God is reduced to actuality as soon as the person stands? And if so, does this not contradict God's status as Pure Act? It is Saint Thomas' second line of argument concerning the metaphysics of philosophical creationism, a line of argument which is Augustinian in origin, which answers these questions, and resolves the difficulties they pose.

According to Aquinas, God's act of creation is never in potency, even to a changing effect, i.e. to the natural world and everything in it; his reason is straightforward. As seen, insofar as God is Necessary Being or Pure Act, He is immutable.
This means that God is eternal. But the eternity of God cannot be an eternity in time, in the classical sense of something everlasting which nonetheless exists in time. There are several reasons for this; one reason pertains to how, as also seen, what is Pure Act or Necessary Being must be infinite being.

What exists in time is, by definition, limited by time, [and place], or more specifically, by the passage of time. At every moment of a temporal thing’s existence, it is limited or present to only a particular time, and absent from the time past and time future. But God, as infinite, cannot be limited in any way, which means that neither can He be limited by time, nor to any particular time. Thus, God’s eternity is such that it must be timeless; He must be outside of time, and as infinite, He can be absent from no time, [as His absence from any time would constitute a limit in Him]. From this it follows that what is past and future to a temporal being is eternally present to God, or to Eternal or Timeless Being. And this means that what God creates, even if temporal, is never absent from Him, rendering Him never in potency to it, even if from a temporal standpoint it is yet to exist, or has ceased existing.

Having said this, a further difficulty arises in the metaphysics of philosophical creationism, perhaps the most profound of all such difficulties. God may not be in potency to His act of creation, but is He not limited to it? In other words, to argue that God is the Creator seems to imply that He
creates of necessity, [since, as Pure Act, He cannot change]. This implies that there must be a creation, [since God cannot be the Creator without a creation], which further implies that God is necessarily tied to creation. Such implications are, of course, repugnant to the Divine Necessity, as they contradict the infinity this entails by limiting God to the act of creation and binding Him to a relation with creatures. It is St. Thomas resolution of this problem which shows that God created deliberately and freely; and this illustration, in addition to Aquinas' proof for God's existence and status as Creator have, as pointed out in Section Four, a direct bearing on the validity of the naturalism of Thomistic ethics. Such an illustration begins with St. Thomas' argument that God does not create by chance."

As discussed previously, as a Being whose essence is being, God exists necessarily and infinitely. But as Necessary and Infinite Being, God must be absolutely simple: i.e. there can be no real composition in God. This means that any act of God is not really distinct from God, Himself. Consequently, Aquinas concludes that since God does not exist by chance, but necessarily, it follows that His act of creation cannot exist by chance. From this it appears to follow that God's act of creation exists of necessity. But Aquinas shows that this is not the case either.
As seen above, God is never in potency to His act of creation. From this it follows that He is never exigent or in privation relative to that act: for what is never in potency can never be exigent to act, or to the realization of a potency. Strictly speaking, this means that God does not act of necessity in creating, since only an act which arises from an exigency to act is an act of necessity. This is further confirmed by the fact that God must be purely actual and infinite; there can be no exigency to act in what is wholly in act and lacking in nothing. And so, as Aquinas holds, it follows that God does not need to create.¹

But if God's act of creation is neither an act of necessity, nor an act which can be due to chance, it must be a deliberate or intentional act in God. This is because, as Aristotle shows, a deliberate or intentional act must be the act of an agent which is neither an act of necessity, nor an act which can be the result of chance.⁴⁴ His point is that what an agent does of necessity or chance is beyond the agent's control; but a deliberate act must be within an agent's control. Furthermore, such an act is not merely voluntary, in the sense that the principle of the act is within to the agent,⁴⁵ since a voluntary act, [i.e. a movement], can still be one of necessity insofar as it arises from an exigency in the agent, and so is, strictly speaking, not within the agent's control. In other words, what is merely voluntary may still be required of its agent.⁵⁰
But God's act of creation can be due neither to necessity nor chance. Therefore, it must be not merely a voluntary, but a deliberate or intentional act of God. Furthermore, creation must be a deliberate act of God which is absolutely free since, again, there can be no exigency to act in God prior to such an act. He has no need to create; and an act which is in no way needed by its agent is an act which is absolutely free.  

The latter point should not be misconstrued, however, as signifying that God's act of creation admits of no necessity. It is a free and deliberate act because it cannot be an act to which God is exigent, nor an act which exists by chance. Nonetheless, Aquinas argues that insofar as God deliberately and freely creates, He necessarily does so. Such an argument may appear to contradict Aquinas' admonition that God does not create of necessity; but in fact, there is no contradiction. 

To argue that God necessarily creates is not equivalent to arguing that He creates of necessity. As stated above, God is absolutely simple; there is no composition in Him. He also exists necessarily or eternally. Hence, God's act of creating is eternal; the act necessarily exists because its agent necessarily exists, and because there can be no real distinction between an agent which exists necessarily and any act of that agent. It is tempting to construe this point as signifying that God's act of creating cannot, therefore, be deliberate and free, since it necessarily exists insofar as God necessarily exists.
But the following analogy will show that this is not the case.

If a man is actually sitting, then it follows that he is necessarily sitting, but it does not follow from this that he sits of necessity, i.e. that his act cannot be deliberate and free. Add to this scenario the qualification, [admittedly absurd in the case of a human being], that the man somehow necessarily exists, and so is eternal, and absolutely simple, and the result is the same, except that his sitting is now rendered an eternal or necessarily existing act which is not really distinct from the man himself. In other words, it still does not follow that such a man sits of necessity; his act could still be deliberate and free, except it would be a necessarily existing or eternal deliberate and free act.

Similarly, if God, Who really does necessarily exist, and Who is thus really eternal, and absolutely simple is actually creating, then it follows that He is necessarily creating, so that His act of creation necessarily exists or is eternal and not really distinct from God, Himself. But it does not follow from this that God is creating of necessity. His act can still be deliberate and free, except that it would be a necessarily existing or eternal deliberate and free act which is not really distinct from God. And indeed, because it is not really distinct from God, such an act must be deliberate and free, since it cannot be an act existing by chance, and since God admits of no exigency to act.
The general point is that any act, whether or not it is deliberate and free, will exist either necessarily or contingently depending upon whether its agent exists necessarily or contingently. Just as the deliberate and free act of an agent existing contingently is a deliberate and free act existing contingently, so the deliberate and free act of an agent existing necessarily is a deliberate and free act existing necessarily. Thus, the act of sitting by a man exists contingently because the man exists contingently, although that act may still be deliberate and free. Similarly, the act of creating by God exists necessarily and eternally, because God exists necessarily and eternally, although such an act not only can, but must be deliberate and free, since, again, it cannot be an act existing by chance, and God admits of no exigency to act.

God's act of creating is, then, an eternal, deliberate and free act, or a deliberate and free act existing from eternity; it is not an act of necessity or an act existing by chance. As such, a series of implications ensue, as discussed in Section Four, which have direct bearing on the pursuit of a legitimate science of normative ethics, and the success of St. Thomas's naturalism in this pursuit.

* * * *
As seen in Section Four, St. Thomas constructs a naturalistic argument not only for the existence of an objective and universal ultimate goal of human life, but also for the existence of naturally known principles by which human beings are directed to this end. Such an argument was shown to presuppose three postulates, and to depend for its validity upon these postulates: [1]. That God exists, [2]. That God is the Creator of the natural world, and [3]. That God created deliberately or with purpose. Such postulates have now been shown to be supported by valid philosophical arguments, from which it follows that the naturalistic argument presupposing them is also philosophical, and that it is also valid.

It is via such an argument that St. Thomas accounts for the necessary relation between being/actuality and goodness which is the culmination of his meta-ethical theory. Furthermore, Aquinas shows why every natural substance, including the human being, acts of necessity for an end, or is, by definition, end-driven. Finally, he establishes that there is a general end or "common good" of all, what it involves and why, and how each specific end governing the movements of each natural substance is related to, or derived from this general end.

Aquinas does all of the above by demonstrating, first and foremost, that all natural substances are created, and then by
deducing what is implied by this:\footnote{55}

[1]. That God exists as the Creator, and that He is Necessary, Infinite, Eternal and Simple Being, or Pure Act.

[2]. That God created deliberately and freely, and so with purpose or for an end.

[3]. That such an end is God, Himself, i.e. to manifest His Nature as imitable in finite form.

[4]. That insofar as God's Nature is Pure Act, this is of necessity the end of creation and all creatures comprising it, since these are created for the sake of imitating God's Nature in finite form. In other words, all creatures qua creatures are inclined to actuality as their end, [in accordance with specific Divine Exemplars or Templates - God's Ideas of them as finite forms imitable of His Essence], for it is thus that they imitate the Divine Nature to which they are directed qua creatures.

Through such a deduction, Aquinas proves that there exists an objective and universal ultimate human goal to which people are inclined qua human.

First of all, St. Thomas establishes that every natural substance, including the human being, of necessity exists for an end, i.e. that nature is teleological, end-driven, as it only exists so as to realize an end: to imitate and reflect God. Secondly, Aquinas establishes why every natural substance, including the human being, is driven to actuality, or why being/actuality is of necessity the good of every natural substance, and why Pure Actuality is the primary sense of goodness. Since God is of necessity the end of all creation, and
since God is Pure Act, it follows that God or Pure Act is the primary referent of goodness, and that the good of every creature is actuality in accordance with a Divine Exemplar. In other words, since God is the end of all, and God is Pure Act, then the end of all is Pure Act, so that it is the extent to which a creature is in act that it realizes its end.

The latter point is, of course, the ultimate foundation for Aquinas' argument in ST. I. 5. 1, [as discussed in Section Four], which shows that being and goodness are co-extensive. Since God is necessarily the end of all, [i.e. since God is the Good], since God is necessarily Pure Act, and since the Divine Simplicity requires that there is no real distinction between whatever is necessarily predicated of God, it follows that there is no real distinction between being/actuality and goodness.

Finally, from the implications he deduces from his demonstration that natural substances are created, Aquinas establishes that there is an intrinsic moving principle in every natural substance, including the human being, [i.e. its substantial form or nature], by which it is disposed to specific activities, as well as an exigency to engage in these activities, and that both this disposition and this exigency are due to its status as a creature, and the end to which it is directed in being created by God. The fact that every natural substance is not only disposed to specific acts, stemming from the kind of thing that it is, but also that it is inclined to
realize these acts, is implied by the fact that it is made to reflect or imitate God in a finite form according to a Divine Exemplar. Better still, the fact that every natural substance is disposed and inclined to realize its specific capacities is implied by the fact that it is a reflection or imitation of God in finite form in accordance with a Divine Exemplar."

As seen, Aquinas accepts from Aristotle that the essence of a natural substance, including the human being, is defined in terms of specific capacities which dispose it to specific activities or second actualities of its form. But Aquinas has also discovered that a natural substance is a species of creature, and a creature is, by definition, something existing for, or directed to the end of imitating or manifesting God's Nature as Pure Act in finite form. Hence, the essence of a natural substance, including of a human being, must include more than merely specific capacities disposing it to specific activities; since it is the essence of a species of creature, that essence must include a natural directive to imitate Pure Act. This means that a natural substance is directed of necessity to actuality.

Indeed, a natural substance cannot exist independently of this directive for the same reason that it cannot exist independently of God. Insofar as a natural substance receives existence from God in being created, it receives the directive to act, i.e. to exist as a finite form imitable of the Divine
Essence in accordance with a Divine Exemplar. The natural substance exists by God, and so is directed by God's reason for conferring existence upon it: that it be in act. To continue with a previous analogy, just as the direction or end of the movement of a pen during the act of writing depends upon the direction or end of the hand by which the pen moves, so too the direction or end of a creature in existing depends upon the direction or end of God by which the creature exists. And so a natural substance, as a creature, can no less exist separately from the directive to act, than it can exist separately from the act of existence which it receives from God.

Of course, to some extent, a natural substance, including a human being, fulfills this end or directive to act simply by existing; as Aquinas states, a natural substance is "relatively good" from the "simple being" which follows from the enactment of its substantial form."\(^0\) He means that since goodness is co-extensive with being or actuality, something is good insofar as it is in any way in act, and that from this it follows that the simple existence of a natural substance, by which it is rendered in act as an independent matter/form composite of a specific kind, renders it relatively good, or good in relation to its act of simple being.

But Aquinas holds that a natural substance, including a human being, is not "simply good" as a consequence of its act of simple being, since its end or directive as a creature is to
imitate God or Pure Act in finite form, and simple being alone in a natural substance implies the existence of unrealized specific potencies, and the disposition thereof to specific second actualities of its form. This means that simple being alone in a natural substance falls short of the end to which it is directed as a creature: actuality, or the imitation of God or Pure Act in finite form. In other words, simple being is insufficient as the end of a natural substance, since this end is actuality, or the imitation of what is wholly or purely actual, and a natural substance which simply exists has specific capacities, and so is disposed to specific second actualities of the finite form it bears. Clearly, if something's end is to be in act, or to imitate what is wholly in act, the extent to which it is in potency and not in act, [i.e. capable of, or disposed to acting, but not doing so], detracts from this end, just as if something's end is to move, the extent to which it is potentially moving, [i.e. capable of, or disposed to moving and not actually moving], detracts from this end.

Insofar, then, as a natural substance, as a species of creature, is directed to be in act or to imitate God, Who is Pure Act, it fulfills this end, and so is "simply good", not to the extent that it is in potency, but to the extent that it is in act. This means that the more in act the natural substance is, the more it imitates God, and the more it realizes its end in being created. In other words, a natural substance, including a human being, is inclined of necessity to fully actualize the
capacities defining its nature, or to realize those specific second actualities of its form to which it is disposed, as actuality is the end to which it is directed as an effect of God: i.e., to be in act in accordance with God's Idea of it as a finite form imitable of His Nature is the reason for its very existence."

The latter point serves as the foundation for the heart of the naturalism of Thomistic ethics: Aquinas' arguments for the existence of the Eternal Law of God, and in turn, for the existence of a natural law in human beings. As stated previously, St. Thomas establishes that a law is defined generally as "a promulgated ordinance of reason which rules and measures action for the sake of the common good or end". By virtue of this definition, and from what he has established in his philosophical creationism, he first shows that there exists an Eternal Law directing the movements of all creatures."

As seen, Aquinas establishes philosophically that God exists and that God created the natural world. Aquinas also shows that God did not have to create, [since He needs nothing, or is in no way exigent to the act of creation], and that He did not create by chance, [since there is nothing accidental in God]. Therefore, Aquinas concludes that God must have created deliberately or with purpose.

Furthermore, as demonstrated in Section Four, Aquinas reasons that to have created deliberately, God must be
intelligent and willful, and that He created for a reason or end. St. Thomas proves that this end can be nothing other than God, Himself, since to create for the sake of an end other than Himself is to have that end in mind, but an idea of something other than God in the Divine Mind would contradict the Divine Simplicity.

God's end in creating, then, is Himself; as Aquinas concludes, God's end in creating is His Essence as imitable in a multiplicity of finite forms. From this it follows that every creature, including the human being is, by definition, directed by God, its Creator, to fulfill this end according to the finite form it has; God creates it to be inclined to the actualization of that form, [including to any second actualities of that form which constitute the complete realization of the specific capacities defining it, as in natural substances], since only to the extent that it is actualized or in act does a creature fulfill its role of imitating the Divine Essence which is Pure Act, and in doing so reach the end for which it is created: to be like God.

According to Aquinas, the latter point implies that there exists an Eternal Law: a set of Divine rational ordinances guiding action, directed to the common good, and promulgated. Why? Simply put, because from what has been said above it follows that Divine Reason governs the whole of creation.
The being or existence of all creatures stems from God's act of creating, and is governed by His reason for creating. More specifically, the action [or at least, the movement] of creatures, [i.e., of creatures which move], including human beings, is guided by God's reason in creating them; as stated, Aquinas holds that God's Ideas of His creatures, as imitable of His Essence in a finite form, are the "Exemplars" which their movements are naturally directed to fulfill or actualize, copy or reflect, since it is the reason of their being at all. In other words, God's Ideas of His creatures serve as rational ordinances through which God rules and measures their movements: directs and guides or regulates them as finite forms directed, by definition, by Him to the end of imitating Him. These rational ordinances are directed to the common good: God, Himself, the good common or universal to all, every creature's end and reason for being created, and God's end in creating them. Finally, these ordinances are promulgated; they are instilled in every finite form by virtue of it having that form. Everything created by God, because it is created, is instilled of necessity with an orientation to "its proper act and end": the fulfillment of its form, an end which it has by virtue of being a creature.

There is, then, an Eternal Law and it is imprinted upon the form or nature of every creature, guiding its actions to their proper end. From this it follows that the Eternal Law must be
imprinted upon human nature, since human beings are a natural substance, and as such, do not exist of necessity but are created by God. Consequently, the Eternal Law directs human beings to their proper end: the imitation of God through the realization of specific human capacities. This implies not only that there exists an objective and universal ultimate human goal to which human beings are directed qua human, but according to Aquinas, it also implies the existence of a "natural law" in human beings."

Aquinas points out that insofar as human nature is distinguished specifically by the capacity for reason, it "participates in the Eternal Law in a way appropriate to it" by manifesting the Divine Reason relative to the creation of a human being formally within human reason." Insofar as human action is deliberate, a human being rules and directs his actions by reason, i.e. by rational ordinances. But as seen, human reason itself is ruled and directed by first principles. Since human beings, as creatures, are governed by the Eternal Law, Aquinas concludes that such principles can only be a reflection in human reason of Divine Reason. Aquinas argues that the human being formulates these principles, or rational ordinances, through the apprehension of his own human inclinations - inclinations to realize specific human capacities which he has as a consequence of his status as a creature directed, by definition, to imitate God or Pure Act in finite
In other words, there are inclinations in the human being, as a creature, consequent upon its form, and instilled there by Divine Reason in accordance with God's end in creating a human being, which is to actualize its form as a finite reflection of the Divine Essence. Those natural inclinations are not unlike the inclinations to actuality, consequent upon or in accordance with form, which God instills in all natural substances. But the human form is rational, and so the ordinances of Divine Reason pertaining to it, [i.e. the Eternal Law relevant to the human being], are not merely present in the human being implicitly or informally, i.e. as natural inclinations or tendencies, as they are in a stone, or a plant, or a non-rational animal, but also explicitly or formally, as rational ordinances themselves: necessary first principles present in reason itself and directing rational activity to the pursuit of the human end. In this way, the Eternal Law as it bears upon, or is manifest within the human being, has therein the character of law, or more specifically, of natural law, as opposed to merely natural inclinations, since it is formalized as rational ordinances within the human being himself, and not just within the Divine Intellect.

Again, a law is an ordinance of reason. The Eternal Law pertaining to the human being is actualized in the human being precisely as an ordinance of reason, and not just as an
inclination, owing to the fact that the human being is rational. This point should not be construed, of course, as meaning that God placed within the human mind an innate knowledge of the basic rules pertaining to human action. Aquinas agrees with Aristotle that there are no innate ideas in the human mind. Saint Thomas argues that whatever ideas it has, the human mind gains from experience, or from what it first apprehends.

With regard to speculative reason, as seen, Aquinas argues that the mind first apprehends the intelligible: being in act. From this the mind intuits, i.e., immediately formulates or discovers, the first principle of speculative reason, the principle of non-contradiction: that "what is" is contrary to "what is not". In practical reason, the mind first apprehends the desirable: the generic notion of good, or of being or actuality as an end. This notion is implicit in the mere inclination to act at all which is the foundation of practical reasoning. Without the human inclination to act, there would be no practical reasoning, for practical reason itself operates for the sake of determining how to satisfy the human inclination to act. But there would be no such inclination without the existence of human "goods" or "ends", as an inclination is always an inclination to some act as an end or good. And so practical reasoning immediately formulates or discovers the first principle of practical reason by virtue of the character of its own operation: "the good is to be done and pursued and evil is to be avoided". In other words, practical reason
formalizes the notion of good or end which is implicit in that to which it is oriented: the satisfaction the human inclination to act.

More specifically, what practical reason first apprehends is that to which it is directed by virtue of its operation or function. It functions or operates so as to determine inclinations to their ends, and it has this function only because inclinations exist. Consequently, its first notion or idea is that of good or end, and its first principle is that what is good or an end is something to be done, and what is not a good or an end is something to be avoided.

From this it follows that practical reason has no innate idea of "good", [neither of its existence nor of its nature], and so no innate idea of its first principle. This is because if reason were not to experience inclinations in the human being, it would have no apprehension of good, [the object of inclination], nor any first principle, [as derived from this apprehension]; indeed, it would have no practical dimension at all.

The general inclination to act, [i.e. to actuality in accordance with a Divine Exemplar], then, which God impresses upon human beings in creating them can be construed as the material cause or condition of practical reason's functioning, and the ultimate basis for the principles it uses to function: the "laws", or principles that it naturally formulates and which
it uses to direct action. The first or most general of these principles is derived directly from this general inclination; other, more specific principles are derived from the first principle, and from the experience of the specific inclinations which people have *qua* human.

Overall, the mere existence of natural human inclinations appears to be the basis even for the very first principle of practical reason, as it is only through the apprehension of the inclination to act in general, or of human appetite, primarily the intellectual appetite, that practical reason apprehends the existence of goodness, and its general nature as an end. From this it follows that the first principle of practical reason, insofar as it derived from this apprehension, must at least define goodness in its most general sense; it must capture the generic sense of goodness as an end.72 Subsequent principles are formulated on the basis of this principle, and from the apprehension of the contents or objects of specific human inclinations; and these principles serve at least to define specific human goods. In other words, practical reason learns of the existence and nature of goodness by the general experience of basic inclinations in the human being, and it learns of what is specifically good by applying this principle to its experience of the specific contents of human inclinations.

Of course, to the extent that these formulated principles pertain to goodness, they do not just present to reason what is
good, but have a prescriptive force; they have the character of what Aquinas calls "law": ordinances of reason directing action. This is because they describe precisely "what is to be done". The first principle of practical reason generally prescribes that "ends are to be pursued"; all others prescribe which ends, or what exactly is to be pursued. These principles or ordinances of reason directing action are, of course, directed to the common good, as they are based primarily upon the human inclination to this good: the fulfillment of that end, actuality in accordance with a Divine Exemplar, to which human beings, as creatures, are directed of necessity. Furthermore, such principles are promulgated; they are formalized in the operation of practical reasoning. And finally, they are natural; they are derived from natural human inclinations, and more importantly, they exist of necessity: the inclinations which serve as the basis for these principles, including the inclination to reason itself, are the result of the directive to actuality which human beings have qua creatures.

It is for the latter reason, as stated in Section Four, that Aquinas's argument for the existence of natural law, the heart of his moral philosophy, cannot be truly understood, nor deemed valid apart from Aquinas' arguments which show why there exist objective and universal inclinations in people, inclinations which exist as a consequence of being directed to the objective and universal human end of realizing specific
human capacities. And of course, the latter arguments themselves amount to the implications of Aquinas' philosophical creationism, which shows that human beings, as well as all natural substances, are created, or depend for their existence upon a Being existing as Pure Act: God.

Insofar, then, as this discussion has established the validity of the philosophical creationism of Saint Thomas Aquinas, and how it implies that there exists an objective and universal ultimate human end to which people are directed of necessity, [i.e. the realization of specific human capacities], it has established the validity of the naturalism of Aquinas, and thus, the validity of that moral philosophy defined by this naturalism....
Conclusion

In conclusion, this discussion set out to realize two concomitant objectives. First of all, and most importantly, it set out to expound the true nature of the arguments of St. Thomas Aquinas in support of the legitimacy of moral science, and to demonstrate their validity. Secondly, it set out to illustrate and to explain some of the deficiencies latent within modern interpretations of those arguments, and of Thomistic ethics as a whole.

In the most general of terms, achieving the first objective involved exploring the meta-ethic and axiology underlying Aquinas' moral theory. Ultimately, this meant examining the arguments in support of his general and specific conceptions of goodness - conceptions inspired no doubt by Aristotle and Christian revelation - but which nonetheless serve as the foundation for St. Thomas' unique philosophical approach to establishing the objectivity, universality, and intelligibility of moral principles. On the other hand, and again very generally, achieving the second objective involved showing how modern interpretations of Thomistic ethics have misapprehended such an approach; how they have provided, in effect, only partial accounts of it, and in so doing, have left their subject vulnerable to the same problems which continue to confound modern moral philosophers. In an effort to explicate the more
specific character of these general discoveries which serve to realize its two objectives, this discussion was divided into five progressive sections.

The first two sections were intended to set the stage for the pursuit of the discussion's principal aim, and to provide some background for the pursuit of its secondary aim. In this regard, Section One, entitled "Science, Pseudo-science, and the Pursuit of Ethics", attempted to determine the general criteria which must be met in order for any science to be deemed legitimate, [in the classical sense of the term "science" which denotes the Aristotelian notion of episteme], in order to establish, very generally, what Aquinas will have had to do so as to illustrate the legitimacy of moral science.

Here, it was established that a science is legitimate if and only if it meets at least two criteria: [1]. it must have a legitimate subject matter, meaning a subject of inquiry which really or objectively exists, and which is universal in scope; and [2]. this legitimate subject-matter must be knowable or intelligible, i.e. it must be, either directly or indirectly, accessible to human understanding in terms of both its existence and its nature. Hence, it was established in Section One that in order for St. Thomas to have proven that ethics is a legitimate science, he will have had to show that there objectively exists a set of universal moral principles which prescribe, [insofar as they are the objects of a science of normative ethics], how
human beings ought to deliberately behave, and that the contents of this set is knowable or accessible to human understanding.

With the general criteria needed to establish the legitimacy of moral science thus set out, Section Two, entitled "The Problem of the Objectivity of Ethics", proceeded to illustrate, from the modern standpoint, the main obstacle standing in the way of fulfilling such criteria, and the apparent insufficiency of the conventional methods employed to resolve it. Although, as the title of this second section suggests, such a problem bears on the issue of how to establish the objectivity of moral principles, [i.e. the objective existence of a subject-matter for ethics], its scope was shown to be much broader. In fact, the "problem of the objectivity of ethics" was seen to be nothing more than a modern synonym for the problem of demonstrating the legitimacy of moral science, i.e., the problem of showing that ethics has a subject-matter which is not only objectively real, but also universal in scope and intelligible. This is because, as was shown in Section Two, the problem of the objectivity of ethics questions the human ability to establish the truth-value of the so-called "basic" or most general normative claims made by ethicists. Hence, it was shown to be a problem which concerns much more than the objectivity of the subject-matter of ethics; it was shown to be a problem which ultimately concerns the intelligibility and universality of this subject-matter.
The two traditional methods or approaches used by moral philosophers in their attempts to resolve such a problem were characterized in Section Two as the contrary approaches of naturalism and non-naturalism. Each was analyzed and found to be at least seemingly untenable. First, the approach of naturalism was discussed, or the approach whereby a moral philosopher attempts to establish the objectivity, universality, and intelligibility of the subject-matter of ethics by grounding it in the objectivity, universality, and intelligibility of the subject-matter of some theoretical or descriptive science. The naturalist was described as trying either to deduce the legitimacy of moral science from, or reduce it to, or define it in terms of, the legitimacy of non-moral, or non-normative science. And in each instance this naturalistic approach was seen to be confronted with the same, apparently impassable hazard: the Naturalistic Fallacy, or the imputation that any effort to base the normative in the non-normative involves an illicit transition from fact to value.

In contrast to the approach of naturalism, the approach of non-naturalism was shown to abandon the preconception that the normative bears any relation to the non-normative. The non-naturalist was depicted as arguing that the objectivity, universality, and intelligibility of the subject-matter of ethics is based upon some form of natural, a priori, or intuitive awareness in human beings of moral principles. While
such an approach thus avoids committing the Naturalistic Fallacy, it was shown to confront an apparently insurmountable impediment of its own.

The existence of moral polemics and disagreements, as well as peoples’ beliefs that they often err in what they hold to be good and bad, or right and wrong, suggests that the position of the non-naturalist is false. And while non-naturalism has developed a formula for countering this suggestion, this cure was revealed to be worse than the disease. It was uncovered that even if non-naturalism can successfully demonstrate that people must have a natural, a priori or intuitive awareness of moral principles, it seems that it cannot demonstrate that they have a natural, a priori or intuitive awareness of the same moral principles. For since people disagree about morality, since non-naturalism can appeal only to natural, a priori, or intuitive knowledge in defense of its position, [as anything else would be to collapse into some form of naturalism], and since it seems absurd to claim that people have a natural, a priori or intuitive awareness that others have the same natural, a priori or intuitive awareness, it seems impossible for the non-naturalist to effectively establish the universality of the subject-matter of ethics, even if it is granted that he can establish its objectivity.

Given the weaknesses in both the naturalistic and non-naturalistic approaches to resolving the problem of the
objectivity of ethics, the question was raised as to whether it is even possible to establish the legitimacy of moral science. This question became the focal point of Section Three, entitled "A General Hypothesis and Critique", in which two proposals were forwarded. First, it was proposed that the moral philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, if rightly understood, can be shown to incorporate an approach to ethics which validly demonstrates that moral science is legitimate. Secondly, it was proposed that this moral philosophy has not, in fact, been rightly understood in the modern context.

The first proposal involved the hypothesis that the key to his having validly demonstrated the legitimacy of moral science lies in St. Thomas' meta-ethical theory of goodness, insofar as this theory serves as the basis for his unique approach to ethics, an approach which combines elements of both naturalism and non-naturalism. The second proposal involved the hypothesis that modern interpretations tend to focus exclusively on either the naturalism or the non-naturalism of Aquinas, thus failing to provide an holistic account of his moral theory, and as a result, often erring in their understanding of that dimension of it to which they do give their attention. Some of the general details of these two hypotheses were then further explored in Section Three.

For example, it was argued that the critical insight of St. Thomas' meta-ethical theory of goodness is that "goodness" is a
term which is predicted pros hen, i.e., it is a term which has neither a purely univocal nor a purely equivocal meaning, but a primary meaning and various derivative meanings which are causally related to the former. The failure on the part of modern moral philosophers to enjoy this insight partly explains some of the obstacles confronted by them which were discussed in Section Two: e.g., the difficulties faced by most naturalists in their attempts to define goodness univocally, and as a result of such difficulties, the non-naturalist conclusion that goodness is "indefinable". The general character of St. Thomas' hybrid approach to ethics was also explored, as well as how the naturalistic and non-naturalistic dimensions of his thought might avoid the problems affecting these approaches which were also expounded in Section Two: the Naturalistic Fallacy in the case of the naturalist, and the issue of accounting for moral disagreements and of demonstrating the universality of moral principles in the case of the non-naturalist.

It was proposed that the naturalism of Aquinas is expressed ultimately in the arguments from his metaphysics and natural theology, arguments which reveal the teleological character of nature and the existence and nature of the primary sense of human goodness, i.e., the existence and nature of an end to which human beings are directed of necessity. It was suggested that this naturalism circumvents the hitherto impassible Naturalistic Fallacy by revealing that nature itself is
normative or prescriptive, or better still, that there are values implicit within, and so deducible from the descriptions or facts of nature, insofar as all natural processes, including the human process of volition, are perforce end-driven or end-oriented, and insofar as an end is, by definition, "what ought to be", and is thus valued or prescribed by that which is oriented toward it.

Furthermore, it was postulated in Section Three that the non-naturalism of Aquinas is expressed in his arguments for the claim that there must be in human beings a natural awareness of basic moral principles, or "principles of practical reason" which comprise both a general directive to the pursuit of ends, as well as specific directives to the pursuit of specific ends, insofar as human beings engage in deliberate behavior, or in the pursuit of deliberate ends, and insofar as this pursuit must presuppose a prior awareness of, and natural directives to, non-deliberate ends. It was also submitted that this Thomistic non-naturalism circumvents the problems discussed in Section Two which pertain to such an approach, but that it does so primarily via the support of his naturalistic arguments. It was explained, for instance, that the latter serve not only to further substantiate the notion that there must be in human beings a natural awareness of fundamental directives to the pursuit of ends, but also that they serve to elucidate why each person must be aware of the same natural directives, as well as why moral
disagreements can exist, and how they are ultimately resolvable. The latter line of argument was interpreted, of course, as insinuating that it is the naturalism and not the non-naturalism of Aquinas which is the more fundamental in his moral theory.

Finally, the third section advanced three speculative reasons for why, in general, modern interpreters of Thomistic ethics tend to express only a partial grasp of Aquinas' approach to demonstrating the legitimacy of moral science. First, it was suggested that they might be doing so as a consequence of the difficulty presented in recognizing how both a naturalistic and non-naturalistic approach to ethics can be rendered philosophically compatible and utilized within the same moral theory. Secondly, it was suggested that, while it is difficult to imagine how modern interpreters can be unaware that Thomistic ethics expresses both naturalistic and non-naturalistic tendencies, they might focus on only one of the dimensions of this approach because they regard the other to be characteristic of St. Thomas' revealed theology, and so as essentially non-philosophical. Finally, it was ventured that modern interpreters might be failing to provide holistic accounts of Thomistic ethics because they are prejudiced either by having too much respect for the Naturalistic Fallacy, [as may be the case for those who emphasize the non-naturalism of Aquinas], or by having too little respect for it, [as may be the case for those who emphasize his naturalism].
Overall, Section Three can be seen as playing a transitional role relative to the other sections of this discussion. Following the general, and largely systematic topics of the first two sections, which involved, as seen, determining the general criteria which must be met in order for ethics to be deemed a legitimate science, and illustrating the problems confronting the ethicist's ability to validly demonstrate how such criteria can be met, the third section serves to apply these topics specifically to Thomistic ethics. It hypothesizes that Aquinas validly demonstrates that ethics is a legitimate science, and it hypothesizes as to how he does so. It also hypothesizes that modern interpretations of Thomistic ethics are generally lacking in how they understand this demonstration. The remaining sections of this discussion, i.e., sections Four and Five, were then devoted to the task of proving such hypotheses.

Section 4, entitled "Specific Insights and Specific Errors", was directed primarily to the performance of three tasks: [1]. explicating two prominent and influential modern interpretations of Thomistic ethics, [the first tending toward a purely naturalistic reading of it, and the other toward a purely non-naturalistic reading]; [2]. bringing to light the respective deficiencies of these interpretations; and in the process, [3]. conveying some specific details relating to the true nature and validity of St. Thomas' moral arguments. With regard to the first two tasks, the views of Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore
Stump were the first to be examined. They were revealed as having provided an accurate reading of the ultimate conclusion of St. Thomas' meta-ethical theory, the foundation of the naturalism of his ethics, that goodness is co-extensive with being, and that the good of all natural substances, including human beings, lies in the realization of the potencies they bear as substances of a specific kind. However, it was also shown that they convey at best a truncated account of St. Thomas' arguments in support of such a conclusion, and at worst, a misconstrual of the arguments which they do consider in its support.

For instance, it was revealed that Stump and Kretzmann appear to regard St. Thomas' argument for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness in ST. I. 5. 1. as a self-contained and self-sufficient expression of his meta-ethic. However, evidence was brought to bear which suggests otherwise, i.e., that some key premises in this argument are wholly dependent upon subordinate arguments from Aquinas' metaphysics and natural theology - arguments which show why, for instance, all natural substances are directed of necessity to the realization of the potencies they bear as substances of a specific kind. The same evidence also seemed to suggest that Kretzmann and Stump have misunderstood certain premises in the argument of ST. 1. 5. 1., [as well as in other Thomistic arguments written in the same vein], in such a way that a correct understanding would seem to render their particular reading circular.
The explication and analysis of the position of Kretzmann and Stump also provided the opportunity to uncover some key features of Thomistic naturalism. Most importantly, it was revealed that St. Thomas' conception of the primary meaning of goodness is divisible into both a generic as well as a specific sense. The generic sense of goodness simply denotes the analytical notion of the good as an "end" or "object of desire". From this it follows that whatever is an end or object of desire is good in the generic sense.

But this generic sense of goodness is supplemented with a more specific sense, i.e., that which denotes the exact nature of the end toward which natural substances are directed of necessity: the realization of the potencies they bear as substances of a specific kind. Unlike the generic, the specific notion of goodness is not analytical or self-evident, at least not in the sense of being per se nota quoad nos. Rather, it requires a very careful and exhaustive demonstration; and in the context of the discussion of the position of Kretzmann and Stump, it was submitted that this demonstration depends proximally upon St. Thomas' arguments for the teleological character of nature, and ultimately upon his arguments in support of a "philosophical creationism".

The latter point played an important role in the second modern interpretation of Thomistic ethics which was the object of scrutiny in Section Four: the position of Germain Grisez.
The insightful and probing appreciation of the non-naturalism of St. Thomas' moral philosophy in the thought of Grisez was applauded, as was his demonstration against the prevalent modern failure to distinguish the Thomistic theory of natural law from the "scholastic" version advanced by Francisco Suarez three centuries after Aquinas. It was established that Grisez is certainly correct in pointing out that Thomistic ethics does indeed incorporate a non-naturalistic approach to ethics, and in what way this non-naturalism is valid. Indeed, it was revealed in Section Four that Aquinas explicitly states that there exist principles of practical reasoning directing human behavior which are to be regarded as "self evident", and of which people have a "natural awareness". Furthermore, it was shown that Aquinas provides valid arguments in support of such a view: for instance, and as stated previously, he reasons that the pursuit of deliberate ends by human beings must presuppose in them a prior awareness of, and directive to non-deliberate ends. Finally, it was shown that Aquinas also identifies the contents of these directives. The first principle of practical reasoning, [FPPR], which states that "the good is to be pursued and done, and evil is to be avoided", corresponds to a general directive to the pursuit of ends in human beings as a consequence of their general inclination to this pursuit. The supplementary principles of practical reason are derived from the first, and from the awareness of the contents of specific natural human inclinations, such as the inclination to self-
Grisez was also shown to be correct in his assessment that Thomistic ethics is indeed distinct from what he terms "scholastic natural law theory", [SNLT], and that the latter has numerous weaknesses, such as its apparent failure to avoid the Naturalistic Fallacy.

However, and in spite of the strengths of his position, it was shown that Grisez also seems to make a number of errors in his interpretation of Thomistic ethics, four of which stand out. First, he appears convinced that to interpret Aquinas as a naturalist is always to confuse his position with that of SNLT. This first mistake leads directly into a second: Grisez' apparent oversight regarding the fact that there does indeed exist a naturalistic dimension to Thomistic ethics, and that it only superficially resembles that of SNLT. Related to this second error is the third: in failing to recognize the true naturalism of Aquinas, Grisez also fails to recognize, on the assumption of the validity of the philosophical creationism of Aquinas which supports them, the valid means by which the naturalistic arguments of his ethics overcome the Naturalistic Fallacy. Finally, and most importantly, Grisez does not seem to be aware of the insufficiency of the non-naturalism of Aquinas in relation to the end of demonstrating the legitimacy of moral science, and the support this non-naturalism requires in this regard from St. Thomas' naturalism. Simply put, a careful
analysis of Grisez' position shows that while the non-naturalistic reading of Aquinas which he advocates would suffice to prove the objectivity of certain basic moral principles, [i.e., the principles of practical reasoning], it does not suffice to prove their universality; in order to do so, Grisez' position requires the aid of St. Thomas' naturalism. In particular, it requires his arguments which show why all human beings have the same nature and the same natural inclinations. And contrary to Grisez, these arguments are ultimately based in a "metaphysics of divine causality". It is this basis which becomes the focus of Section Five.

The discussion of the position of Kretzmann and Stump in Section Four revealed that the naturalism of Aquinas is rooted in his arguments for the teleological character of nature, and that these arguments are themselves finally rooted in his philosophical creationism. Furthermore, the discussion of the position of Germain Grisez in the same section revealed that the naturalism of Thomistic ethics is valid only on the assumption of the validity of the arguments for his philosophical creationism upon which the former depend. It was thus the validity of precisely such arguments, and a demonstration of the overall validity of St. Thomas' proof for the legitimacy of moral science taken as a whole, which became the subject of Section Five, entitled "God, Creation and Morality".

In the light of the latter point, it should come as no
surprise that the discussion in Section Five was concerned as much with the metaphysics of Aquinas as it was with his ethics. Here, Thomist ethics was shown to echo the ethics of Aristotle in its teleological and eudaimonistic character. Like Aristotle, St. Thomas was described as seeking to know the existence and nature of what would serve as the first principle of moral science: the ultimate human good or end. But the Thomistic search was shown to depart radically from its classical inspiration; for Aquinas, the existence and nature of the ultimate human good was said to be grasped only as a consequence of a philosophical creationism inconceivable to the Philosopher. Consequently, Section 5 examined St. Thomas' philosophical arguments for: [1]. the existence of God; [2]. His status as Creator; and [3]. the free and deliberate character of his Act of Creation - all of which serve to ground the Thomistic naturalism.

First, it was shown by a demonstration that necessary being can only exist in one wholly independent, immutable, and unlimited instance, and from a recognition of the change, plurality, finitude, and contingency of the world of human experience, that it validly follows that a real distinction between being and essence must apply to what exists in this world. From this real distinction, it was then shown that it validly follows that being must be received in all which is finite, mutable, contingent or plural, and that it can only be received from a Being Whose essence is being. Hence, the
argument that God, or a necessary, infinite, and immutable being of pure actuality must exist, and must be the Creator of all being other than Himself, was shown to be valid. Finally, from the necessary, infinite, immutable, and purely actual Nature of God, it was shown to validly follow that His Act of creation can only be deliberate and free, and that as deliberate and free, it must have an end, and that end can only be God Himself.

On the basis of the latter conclusion, Section Five then proceeded to reiterate and re-examine the implications arising from it which have either a direct or indirect bearing on ethics. For instance, the implications that God must have in mind what He creates, insofar as He creates deliberately, that these Divine Ideas or Exemplars are ideas of nothing other than so many finite forms imitable of His Nature, and that creatures bearing such forms are created by God precisely for the sake of manifesting His Nature in finite form, were each revisited. That such implications themselves further imply that every creature, including the human being, is by definition or of necessity directed to the end of imitating God in finite form, and that for natural substances, this end extends beyond simple existence to the realization of the potencies specific to their form, were also re-examined. Finally, some important implications in the latter point were also re-addressed: that there exists an objective and universal ultimate human good amounting to the perfection of specific human potencies, and that the necessary directive to the pursuit of this good is not
merely manifest in the existence of objective and universal human inclinations, but ultimately in objective and universal "ordinances of reason directing action to the common good" i.e., in the Natural Law, or the principles of practical reason of which human beings must enjoy a natural awareness.

It was thus that Section Five concluded that St. Thomas does indeed validly demonstrate that ethics has an objective, universal, and intelligible subject-matter, and therefore fulfills the criteria of a legitimate science. With this said, it must now be conceded, however, that although from the standpoint of the author of this discussion, it appears to have realized its two objectives, it is also clear that there is considerably more work to be done. For having demonstrated the true nature and validity of St. Thomas' arguments for the legitimacy of moral science, and having addressed how such arguments have been misinterpreted in the modern context, this discussion has not addressed their soundness. Such a daunting and intriguing task is set aside in the hope of pursuing future inquiries.
Notes

[A]. Notes to Section One

1. I.e. objectively real in either a virtual or actual sense. For example, what is abstracted from the objectively real, such as the principles of mathematics, do not have an actual objective existence, but they do have a virtual one.

2. "Natural" in this context means "physical", "material", and "temporal", as opposed to "metaphysical", "immaterial", and "eternal". Objects or entities of the latter kind, if they really exist, would qualify as legitimate objects of science, the reasons for which are forthcoming. [See notes 18 and 19 of Section 1 below].


4. Ibid. 980a20. "All men by nature desire understanding for its own sake".

5. De Anima 431b20-432a15.

6. Ibid. See also: De Anima 432b7. The importance of this point in the context of Thomistic Ethics will be explored in greater detail in Section 3 of this discussion.

7. The absence of language among animals is the most obvious evidence in support of this view.

8. Metaphysics 982a5-983a25.


10. These will be explored in greater detail in Section 5.


12. See note #4 from Section 5.

13. I.e. the most remote or ultimate causes or explanations of a thing.


16. Ibid.


18. See also note #15 from Section 5. As opposed to "substantial" or essential attributes, the accidental are those which, in general, may change throughout the term of the existence of a natural object without compromising its identity, or the kind of object it is. In the Categories, (1b25 -2a11), Aristotle distinguishes nine kinds of accidental attributes in natural substances. For him, what is substantial is really the object of science: the separate or discreet entity bearing a non-arbitrary unity as understood apart from any of its accidents. This is why substances without accidents, (i.e. immaterial substances), although particular, qualify as direct objects of science.

19. See also note #14 from Section 5. In Aristotle's hylomorphic conception of the natural world, "form" is the principle of actuality and relative stability in a natural object, whereas "matter" is the principle of potentiality and individuation. Thus, it is its form which renders the object intelligible to the mind, and is the subject of science: matter, which is in itself purely potential, is wholly obscure and unintelligible, (as what is wholly formless or non-actual is conceptually unfathomable). It is therefore more accurate or precise to say that it is the material dimension of its hylomorphic composition which renders an individual natural object as such unsuitable as an object of science: the individual natural object is never wholly in act, and so it is never wholly intelligible to human perception. And so a complete actual grasp of the individual natural object qua individual is impossible. Something is intelligible to the human mind only to the extent that it is in act, i.e., only to the extent that it can be perceived in someway, or "act" upon perception. From this it follows that what has an indefinite or unstable actuality, has an indefinite or unstable intelligibility. Of course, the fact that a natural object is material explains how and why it is
changeable, why it has accidental attributes, or individuating characteristics, and so why it has an indefinite intelligibility. These are consequences of its materiality, and so it is easy to understand how, strictly speaking, they serve to make the natural object scientifically unknowable.


21. The main area of human speculation in which this is thought to be most problematic is, of course, metaphysical speculation. The question of whether the objects of metaphysics are accessible to human perception, and subsequently, whether metaphysics is a viable science, is actually quite ancient, (e.g. both Aristotle and Aquinas wrestle with it explicitly). However, it is really in modern philosophy that such questions have become polemical, with some philosophers. (e.g. Immanuel Kant), arguing that an authentic metaphysical science, [i.e., a transcendent metaphysics], is impossible. Given my hypothesis that the objective basis needed for a viable moral science can only be supplied by a valid metaphysics - and that Aquinas succeeds in this regard - I do not regard it as coincidental that the rise of scepticism in modern metaphysics has paralleled the rise of scepticism in ethics.

22. Joseph Owens. "The Causal Proposition - Principle or Conclusion". The Modern Schoolman. XXXII. January, March & May, 1955. pp. 159-171; 259-270; 323-339. Where change is defined as the reduction of a potency to actuality. [Physics 241b24-242a15; Metaphysics 1069b3-34; 1070b17-20], it follows that every change requires a cause. This is because it is contradictory to suppose that a potency can reduce itself to actuality, [since this would require the potency to be actual, in order to act upon itself], or that nothing actualizes the potency, [since this means that an act occurs or exists, i.e. the act of the reduction of a potency to act, without something acting or something in act]. In Section 5 of this discussion, the Thomistic argument for the fact that all finite entities are caused will be explored in the context of elucidating the metaphysical foundation of his ethics.

23. De Ente et Essentia 4. 5.

24. The distinction between being and essence in all finite substances plays a central role in Thomistic metaphysics and subsequently in Thomistic ethics. The distinction serves, for example, as the basis for Aquinas' argument that all substances are created and maintained in existence by a transcendent source: a Being Whose very Essence is Being. And as will be explained in Section 5, such an argument is a key element in Aquinas' overall proof for the viability of moral science. Among other things, Aristotle's argument lacks this element. Nonetheless, the Aristotelian approach to constructing a legitimate moral science is really what inspires Saint Thomas' insight into how metaphysics supports ethics.

25. Metaphysics 992a5-993a23. The point is sound even from the standpoint of virtual innatism, or the view that human beings have an innate knowledge of universal concepts which is formalized or raised to the level of consciousness through their experience with particulars. Even within such a theory, universals are still only indirectly accessible to human perception, and depend upon the intercession of experience with particulars to become intelligible. Of course, neither Aristotle nor Aquinas were virtual innatists, associating such a theory with Platonism, [i.e. the Doctrine of Recollection], and rejecting it outright.
[B]. Notes To Section Two

1. Morality in this context is defined as the set of rules governing or prescribing how people ought to act.

2. Some modern moral theories have attempted to circumvent the problem of ethical objectivity by advocating "non-cognitivism" in ethics, whereby it is alleged that normative propositions are not really propositions at all; that they do not "propose" anything, but merely express subjective feelings of approval or disapproval, or issue commands. (see Richard Brandt. "The Emotive Theory of Ethics". Philosophical Review. Vol. 59. 1950. pp. 305-318, 535-40.

3. The term is used broadly, but includes only non-naturalists, or anti-naturalists, who are cognitivists. For example, emotivists are anti-naturalists, but are not moral cognitivists. On the other hand, intuitionists are moral cognitivists who are also non-naturalists, though strictly speaking, not all non-naturalists who are moral cognitivists qualify as intuitionists. To avoid ambiguity, unless stated otherwise within the context of a particular point, in this discussion the term "non-naturalist" generally refers to a moral cognitivist [and moral realist and objectivist] who holds that basic moral principles are either naturally known, intuited, or known a priori.

4. The term "induction" is used loosely to denote various forms of non-deductive reasoning. These include generalizations grounded in a number of individual cases, or strict induction; arguments from analogy and authority; and most importantly, arguments to the best causal explanation of certain premises, sometimes referred to as "abduction".


6. Insofar as the present subject of inquiry is the objectivity of normative ethics, it deals with the objectivity of what is prescribed for human conduct. Thus, within this context, the terms "good" and "right", insofar as they are specifically normative terms, supply at least this prescriptive meaning. In other words, analytically, what is normative is prescriptive: hence, positive normative terms, such as "good" and "right". are prescriptive: i.e. predicating them involves formulating a prescription. In Section 4, I shall demonstrate that for Aquinas, goodness in its most generic sense denotes an object of desire or end: something to be pursued and done. However, I shall also contrast this generic sense of goodness with a specific sense, and I shall argue that some of the difficulties confronted by both modern naturalists and non-naturalists alike involve their failure to formally distinguish these senses of goodness.


12. As I shall convey in Section 4, the issue here is one of apparent good versus real good, or better still, of the generic sense of good versus the specific sense of good. The point is that anything can be an object of desire, whereby it is at least apparently or generically good, but what makes it really or specifically good is whether it is truly desirable because, [as I shall demonstrate in Section 5], it is fulfilling of the human being qua human.

13. Ibid.


16. Ibid.


18. Euthyphro 5d-7b.


21. Of course, as already suggested in Section 1, [see note #22 from Section 1], and as will be demonstrated in Section 5, contrary to Kant, to deny that events are caused does, in fact, ultimately involve a contradiction.


23. E.g. G.E. Moore.

24. Of course, a similar problem confronts Kant's general argument for the existence of "transcendental properties" and synthetic *a priori* propositions, as a few philosophers have attempted to show that the universal consensus which Kant's examples demand is lacking. For example, Friedrich Nietzsche constructs an argument in his work, *Beyond Good And Evil*, which was intended to undermine the view that Kant's transcendental properties are necessarily intuited by the human mind. Nietzsche attempts to illustrate that certain biases or "prejudices" necessarily impede philosophers, and subsequently all human beings, from obtaining a knowledge of strictly necessary and universal principles and concepts. One of these biases concerns the idea of "language-locked philosophy", or "linguistic relativism":

> Where there exists a language affinity it is quite impossible, thanks to the common philosophy of grammar - I mean thanks to unconscious domination and directing by similar grammatical functions - to avoid everything being prepared in advance for a similar evolution and succession of philosophical systems; just as the road seems to be barred to certain other possibilities of world interpretation. Philosophers in the domain of the Ural-Altaic languages (in which the concept of the subject is least developed) will in all probability 'look into the world' differently and be found on different paths from the Indo-Germans and Moslems: the spell of definite grammatical functions is in the last resort the spell of *physiological* value judgement and racial conditions. (p. 32).

What is more. Nietzsche contends that the world is divided into many language-locked linguistic communities, and that each of these communities understands reality according to their own language structures. Thus, the philosopher argues that there is no "God's eye view" of reality, no objectivity and no strict necessity and universality in any human judgment, because all perception is linguistically biased, and is thereby linguistically "relative". And to try to prove this point, Nietzsche cites as an example the "subject-predicate" linguistic structure of Western society, and some Eastern cultures. He argues that this structure forces, or at least prejudices the philosophers of such communities to perceive reality according to the principle of causality, or to understand the world on the basis of the concept that "every event must have a cause". The philosopher is quick to point out that not all societies adhere to such a principle, and these societies, not coincidentally, are those with decidedly different linguistic structures (e.g. the "Ural-Altaic"). The latter communities interpret reality in a much different way, but the point is that they are still able to interpret it, and this suggests that the supposed strict universality and necessity of the principle of causality which is alleged in the Kantian philosophy must be an illusion: in fact, that all of Kant's so-called transcendental properties do not really have an *a priori* status. Of course, Nietzsche's purpose in raising such points, as the title of the work in which he made them suggests, is to ultimately liberate people from their notions of objectivity and strict necessity in ethics. (see: Friedrich Nietzsche. *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale. New York: Penguin. 1986. pp. 15-37).


27. Ibid. pp. 21-22.


29. Ibid.

30. Such as that advanced by G.E. Moore.
[C]. Notes To Section Three

1. For example, to say that a human being is good does not seem to mean exactly the same thing as saying that an action is good.


3. In his hierarchy and division of the sciences, Aristotle distinguishes between theoretical, practical, and productive science. Only the object of theoretical science, the knowledge of necessary truth, is exhausted merely by the act of inquiry itself, and so only theoretical science is wholly descriptive in nature. The others have objects beyond their inquiries, and are thereby prescriptive in nature. For example, productive science aims at the production of things “useful or beautiful”; it does not merely aim at knowing what these are, but at their actual production, and so prescribes what ought to be done to achieve this end. Similarly, practical science aims at the performance of good actions; it does not merely aim at knowing what they are, but at their actual performance, and so prescribes this performance. Furthermore, just as productive science is premised by a theoretical understanding of what is useful or beautiful, so practical science is premised by a theoretical understanding of what is “good”. Hence, Aristotle begins his inquiry into ethics, a practical science aiming at the performance of good action by individual people, with a theoretical inquiry into the nature of goodness, an inquiry which presupposes certain facts from his natural philosophy and metaphysics. As will also be explained in Section 5, Aquinas follows this same approach, but with some important developments. See: *Metaphysics* 1026a35-1027a30; *Topics* 145a15-16.

4. EN 1096b27-28. “But how after all, then, is good spoken of? For [these goods have different accounts, i.e. are homonymous, and yet] are seemingly not homonymous by mere chance. Perhaps they are homonymous by all being derived from a single source [pros hen], or by all referring to a single focus. Or perhaps instead they are homonymous by analogy: for example, as sight is to the body, so understanding is to the soul...”

5. Panayot Butchvarov captures the main point behind this view when he states: “Good is not univocal but neither is it simply equivocal. The crucial distinction is that between the goodness of abstract entities, and the goodness of concrete entities. The attribution of goodness to an abstract entity is a case of essential predication, in the Aristotelian sense in which the statement “Socrates is a man”...is such a case. The attribution of goodness to a concrete entity...is a case of accidental predication, in the Aristotelian sense exemplified in the statement “Socrates is white”. The latter means that “Socrates has a particular quality, that is, a colour. and it is that quality, not Socrates, which strictly speaking is white”. See: Panayot Butchvarov. *Skepticism in Ethics*. (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. 1989). p. 29. See note #7 below.


7. EE 1217b1-1218a15

8. EN 1096b 27-28. [see full quote above: note #4 to Section 3]

9. In fact, Aquinas appears to interpret Aristotle as holding definitively that goodness is a pros hen equivocal term. Although, as suggested, this may actually oversimplify the Aristotelian position. Aristotle, of course, argues explicitly in the *Metaphysics* that “being” is to be understood as a pros hen equivocal. [see *Metaphysics* 1003a21-1005a18]; he also implies that “unity” is such a term as well, insofar as it is co-extensive with being. [see *Metaphysics* 1003b20-35; 1061a1-20]. Aquinas embraces this Aristotelian position, and further argues, in part, it seems, on the basis of the Aristotelian presupposition that the “good is what all desire” and “hence denotes the notion of an end”, as well as on the basis of statements made by Aristotle in the *Eudemian Ethics* - EE 1217b25-32], that “goodness” is also co-extensive with being. [see ST. I. 5. 1], an argument which I will be examine in Section 4. Aquinas thus regards “goodness” [and “being” and “unity”, and indeed, all “transcendental” properties, or properties which transcend the Aristotelian categories] as predicated pros hen.

10. Insofar as St. Thomas interprets Aristotelianism as endorsing the view that goodness is a pros hen equivocal, he seems to regard Aristotle as holding that its primary sense relative to a natural substance, i.e. an actual independent and discreet entity existing in nature. [see Categories 2a11-4b19; *Metaphysics* 1017b17-20], is defined as the realization of the potencies specific to its form or kind [e.g. see EN 1167b16-1168a2; *Physics* 198b10-199b30]. Hence, the primary sense of goodness relative to the human being in particular is the realization of specific human capacities through specific human activities. In other words, the primary sense of goodness relative to the human
being corresponds to what Aristotle identifies as the ultimate human goal, which in turn he identifies as the human *ergon* or function. [see EN 1077b24-1078a20]. Underlying this position are two postulates: First, that the term "good" in its most generic sense denotes an end or final cause, [see EN 1094a3], a point which I will explain in more detail in Section 4; second, that nature is teleological, that it is end or "good" driven [e.g. see again Physics 198b10-198b30]. For Aristotle, the legitimacy of moral science depends upon the existence and intelligibility of an end or good to which human beings are driven of necessity. This end, as said, represents for Aquinas the primary sense of human goodness, and serves, according to Aristotle, as the first principle of moral science. [see EN 1094a23-1094b13]; all other senses of human goodness, e.g. the goodness of human actions, are derived from this primary sense, causally related to it. [if only in terms of what is good instrumentally in relation to what is good per se]. The latter view serves as the principal philosophical inspiration for Thomistic ethics. As I will explain in Sections 4 and 5, Aquinas ultimately identifies the primary sense of goodness relative to the human being as the realization of specific human capacities, an end toward which human beings are driven of necessity. And Aquinas also regards this end as the first principle of ethics, deriving all other senses of human goodness from it. Unlike Aristotle, however, Aquinas maintains a much more explicit metaphysical foundation for the axiology at the basis of his moral theory. While Aristotle, for instance, argues that the Pure Actuality of the Prime Mover or God is the ultimate source of nature's teleology, and is thus the absolute primary sense or referent of goodness in reality. [see Metaphysics 1075a11-1076a4], the relation between this argument and his moral theory is at best tenuous, if not problematic. While it is beyond the scope of the present discussion to examine this relation, I will examine in Sections 4 and 5 the more pronounced relation in Thomism between ethics and metaphysics.


12. For instance. Aquinas characterizes the existence of God as a "preamble of faith", rendering it open to rational inquiry. [ST. I. 2. 2]. In contrast, he argues that the view that the world had a beginning in time is strictly a matter of faith: that it can be neither proved nor disproved by reason alone. [ST. I. 46].

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid. The distinction is also made in numerous other articles.

15. Such as the question of whether the world exists from eternity, or has a beginning and end. [ST. I. 46.]


18. ST. I-II. 64. 1-2.


20. Metaphysics 1075a1 l-1076a4. See also #4 to Section 3 above.

21. See note #4 to Section 3 above.

22. ST. I-II. 94. 2.

23. ST. I-II. 91. 2.


25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. In Section 5, I shall explain that there is, in fact, more underlying the operation of practical reasoning: the existence of the general inclination to act in the human being.

28. ST. I-II. 90. 1-4.

29. ST. I-II. 91. 2.
30. ST. I-II. 91. 1.
31. ST. I-II. 91. 2-3; 94. 2.
32. ST. I-II. 94. 2.
34. ST. I-II. 13. 3.
35. EN 1113a15-24.
36. Ibid.
37. To the question of whether this end is not just the same formally but also materially, the answer is that it is both. For Aquinas, the human end is the same formally: it involves what is humanly fulfilling, or human fulfillment. It is also the same materially: the realization of the specific potencies we have *qua* human through specific activities.
38. EN 1095b14-1096a4.
39. EN 1176b9-1179a33.
40. EN 1177a9-1178a9.
41. EN 1114b1-25.
42. The proof for this point is forthcoming. [Sections 4 and 5]: it is derived from the general argument that human beings have a common nature, and are all directed to the same ends of necessity.
43. ST. I-II. 1. 7.
44. E.g. ST. I-II. 94. 2.
46. ST. I-II. 2-4; esp. ST. I-II. 3. 5.
48. ST. I-II. 2-4; esp. ST. I-II. 2. 5-6; 3. 5.
49. The argument here presupposes the existence of natural substances, a point which will be brought up again in Section 5.
50. That natural substances are defined by specific potencies, and directed to their realization will be addressed in Section 5.
51. EN 1098b13-20.
52. EN 1176a10-30.
53. EN 1106a16-1107a8.
54. EN 1112a15-16; 1114b16-25.
55. ST. I-II. 94. 2.
56. ST. I-II. 55. 1.
57. EN 1103b26-1104b3; ST. I-II. 55-56.
58. EN 1106a16-1107a8; ST. I-II. 64. 1-4.
59. Such a point generally reflects what Aquinas [and Aristotle before him] mean by the phrase “right reason”: i.e. recognizing the true value of what is naturally ordained, and how to achieve it.
60. Republic 580d-585b
61. ST. I-II. 2-4.
1. ST. I. 5. 1.
2. Ibid.
3. ST. I. 3. 4.; ST. I. 4. 1. This will be explored in greater detail in Section 5.
4. EN 1094a1-3
6. E.g. in ST. I-II. 94. 2.
7. Of course, if this is all that goodness means, then normative ethics cannot be shown to be objective, and subjectivism in ethics prevails.
8. While what is true of the genus is also true of the species, what is true of the species is not necessarily true of the genus. For example, something may be an animal, but not a human being, though a human being is always an animal. In the same way, something may be good in the generic sense, but not in the specific sense, although what is good in the specific sense is always good in the generic sense.
9. ST. I-II. 3. 2. This is consistent, of course, with Saint Thomas' view [Augustinian in origin - *Conclusions* 7] that evil in its specific sense denotes a privation - the absence of what ought to be. Physical evil, such as blindness in the eye, [ST. I-II. 18. 1.], involves a privation, the absence of what ought to be: in this case, the actual ability of sight. What is noteworthy is that such a position implies that if evil is the absence of an actual state of affairs which ought to be, then goodness is always some kind of actuality, rendering it co-extensive with being.
10. ST. I. 2. 1.; ST. I-II. 94. 2.
11. Immanuel Kant, of course, makes the same point regarding analytic *a priori* propositions. (*Critique of Pure Reason*, 33. B10.)
12. If something is by nature or of necessity directed or driven to something else, in the absence of that to which it is directed or driven, the former can be construed as being in a state of privation relative to the latter. [i.e. it lacks what of necessity it demands to have].
14. The proposition “all desire their own perfection” is self-evident in itself, according to Aquinas, for as I shall convey in Section 5, he shows that it is the nature of all creatures to be directed to the realization [i.e. the perfection] of their specific potencies.
15. Indeed, it is clear from the structure of the argument in ST. I. 5. 1. that, according to Aquinas, the proposition “what all desire is the perfect” is true because “all desire their own perfection”, since this is what he explicitly states in support of that proposition: “Now it is clear that a thing is desirable insofar as it is perfect; *for all desire their own perfection*”. [italics added].
16. This argument should not be misconstrued as meaning that a human being can only be perfected by what is perfect in its kind. The point is not that one cannot be perfected by what is imperfect; a goal can be achieved by less than ideal means. Rather, the point is that given a certain goal, one naturally desires the best means available to achieve it [e.g. if crossing a canyon, one wants a sturdy bridge]. In other words, one wants something perfect in its kind relative to its function as a means to one’s specific end [though it may not be perfect in its kind absolutely]. Even so, I have adopted this interpretation of the text not because I think it is necessarily the best interpretation, but because it acknowledges Stump and Kretzmann’s line of interpretation as viable, and conveys the oversight they commit. In my view, when Aquinas says that all desire the perfect, I am more inclined to think he is speaking directly of the realization of specific potencies.
17. E.g. from SCG. I. 37. 1; ST. I-II. 94. 2; ST. I-II. 1. 5.; and SCG. III. 3. 4.

18. The point here is not that Kretzmann and Stump actually recognize that these are premises in Aquinas' arguments for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness. Rather, the point is that if, in fact, these are premises in those arguments, then it is circular for Kretzmann and Stump to hold that the contents of such premises follow from such arguments. Indeed, it seems that Kretzmann and Stump do not recognize the true nature of some of the premises in Aquinas' arguments for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness, for if they did recognize this, it stands to reason that they would have recognized the circularity in what they conclude from those arguments.


24. De I'Éritude. 16. 1.

25. This point should not be misconstrued as signifying that the theoretical and practical intellects are themselves really distinct powers, only that their operations are really distinct. The former view would, of course, contradict what St. Thomas argues in ST. I. 79. 11. in which he states explicitly that practical and theoretical reason are, in fact, only conceptually distinct.

26. Ralph McInerny numbers among those modern Thomistic commentators who vehemently disagree with such a view. McInerny hypothesizes that given Aquinas' view regarding the co-extensiveness of being and goodness, there must be a relation between the first principle of theoretical reasoning, the human awareness of which arises as a consequence of the apprehension of being, and the first principle of practical reasoning, the human awareness of which arises as a consequence of the apprehension of goodness [in its generic sense as an end]. The hypothesis is intriguing. Nonetheless, McInerny is unable to isolate any substantive evidence in its support. See: Ralph McInerny. Aquinas On Human Action: A Theory of Practice. (Washington: The Catholic University of America. 1992.) pp. 193-207.


28. Ibid.


30. It is important to note that this does not mean that St. Thomas feels that there exists in the human mind a virtually innate idea of the principle of non-contradiction. The point is that the principle is formed by and within the intellect when it first apprehends being; it is from this apprehension that the intellect actually gains the principle. Aquinas, in fact, argues explicitly in the "Treatise on Man" that the human mind contains no innate ideas, virtual or otherwise. [ST. I. 84. 3]. This point will be revisited in Section 5.


32. As derived primarily from De Legibus. II. 4-7.

33. ST. I. 82. 1.; De Legibus. II. 7.


35. Ibid. p. 364.
36. Ibid. p. 371.
37. Ibid. p. 365.
38. De Vito 3. 9. This point was already alluded to in Section 3.
41. Ibid.
44. This point is, of course, based upon an argument supplied in Section 2, in which I showed that, analytically, the term "good", as normative, or as used in a normative context, has the quality of being prescriptive. [See note # 5 to Section 2].
45. It may be objected that this cannot be the logic of Aquinas' argument, since he demonstrates that being and goodness are co-extensive in ST. I. 5. 1, and therefore prior to demonstrating that God is good in ST. I. 6. 1. However, this assumes that the latter argument depends upon the former argument, which is not the case. In fact, the argument that God is good in ST. I. 6. 1 is not derived from the view that being and goodness are co-extensive, [i.e. Aquinas does not reason that since God is Pure Being, and being and goodness are co-extensive, it follows that God is Pure Goodness]. Rather, such an argument is based upon the view that God, or Pure Act, is the ultimate end of all; and since what is good has the notion of an end, God is good. Furthermore, Aquinas refers to ST. I. 4. 3 in support of this argument. [the question and article immediately prior to ST. I. 5. 1, or his argument for the co-extensiveness of being and goodness]. And within the former article, he argues that all creatures are directed by God to Himself: i.e. to imitate the Divine Essence [Pure Actuality] in finite form. This argument, [which of course implies the goodness of God], serves, then, as the basis for the argument in ST. I. 5. 1 that being and goodness are co-extensive.
46. Ibid
47. ST. I. 6. 1.
48. I.e. the problem of reducing the concept of goodness to moral goodness.
50. ST. I-II. 82. 4.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid. p. 382.
54. Ibid.
55. ST. I. 15. 1-3. A deliberate act implies intelligence and will; i.e. thought directing action, and the choice or decision to act. A deliberate act also implies intent: that whomever performs such an act has in mind, at least logically prior to the act, some aim, purpose, or goal. Why God must have acted deliberately in creating will be explored in Section 5.
56. ST. I. 7. 1-2: ST. 3. 1-7. If God exists as Pure Act or Necessary Being, then if He has parts, each of His parts exists necessarily. Whatever exists necessarily exists infinitely [since if anything limits its being, its being would be in someway contingent on that thing]. Therefore, if God has parts, then each of His parts, as necessary, is infinite. There can be no distinction between things which are infinite, since there is no difference between them by which they can be separated or distinguished. Therefore, there cannot be more than one infinite thing. Therefore, there cannot be parts in God; He cannot be really composed. In Section 5, I shall explore why St. Thomas concludes that God is Pure Act or Necessary Being, and examine in more detail why this implies that He is Infinite Being.
57. ST. I. 15. 1-3. A plurality of subjective mental determinations – i.e. distinct ideas – implies composition in God. The Divine Simplicity cannot admit of any composition, (see note #56). Therefore, there cannot be a plurality of distinct ideas in God. Therefore, God’s knowledge must be one, and what He knows must be one with Himself. Therefore, it can only be in knowing Himself that God knows what He creates. [This argument will be revisited in Section 5.]

58. See note #55.

59. It is, of course, not the only such argument supporting this doctrine, as I shall explore in Section 5.

60. As demonstrated in Section 1, a legitimate science is one with a subject matter which is objectively real and universal in scope.

61. EN 1094a1-5; ST. I-II. 1. 1.

62. It may be interjected that such a point implies that everything that achieves its goal is, therefore, as it “ought to be”, i.e. is “good”. In fact, this implication stands, and is in no way problematic to the Thomistic position so long as one is referring to the goal to which a thing is directed of necessity or by nature, or at least to that which is conducive to this goal. In other words, so long as one is not confusing what is “actually good” with what is “apparently good”, or what is actually a goal, with what merely appears to be a goal, it follows that what achieves it is actually as it ought to be. Indeed, while it is true that any goal, from the standpoint of that which pursues it, is implicitly designated as “what ought to be”, and so is perceived as good, it does not necessarily follow from this that it is actually good from the perspective of that which pursues it, and that what achieves such a goal is actually as it ought to be. This is because the goal to which something is directed of necessity essentially sets the standard by which to determine what is actually good to that thing, or actually an end to it, as opposed to what is only apparently good, and an apparent end to it. More specifically, the goal to which a thing is directed of necessity, the first or basic goal of a thing, determines the quality of all supplementary goals pursued by that thing. The latter are pursued because they are perceived to be either a means to, or a constituent part of the first or basic goal, which means that they qualify as actual or legitimate goals from the standpoint of what pursues them, [i.e., as truly “what ought to be” from that standpoint], only to the extent that they live up to this perception. This is most easily observed in the case of human beings. As pointed out in Section 3, all deliberate goals pursued by people are derived from and presuppose non-deliberate goals, goals to which people are directed of necessity. From this it follows that any deliberate goal which a human being pursues is for the sake of a non-deliberate goal; i.e. it is pursued only to the extent that it is perceived as a means to, or as a constituent part of such a goal. Hence, should a person’s deliberate goal actually lack the quality of being a means to, or a constituent part of the non-deliberate goal for the sake of which it is pursued, the deliberate goal is not actually but only apparently a goal from the standpoint of such a person. For if one’s goal is “P”, and one pursues “Q” only because it appears to be “P”, but is in fact “not-P”, then “Q” is not actually one’s goal, but only apparently one’s goal. Thus, any deliberate human goal which is not actually a means to or constituent part of a non-deliberate human goal, is not really a goal, and so not really “what ought to be” from the standpoint of any person pursuing it; rather, it is only apparently such a goal, and only apparently “what ought to be”. As a result, it can be said that what is actually a person’s goal, [insofar as it fulfills the criteria of what the person is really intending to pursue], is actually “what ought to be” from that person’s standpoint, and that the person actually is as he “ought to be” in the fulfillment of such a goal.

63. I.e., in the manner of Moore’s “open-question critique” of naturalism as discussed in Section Two.

64. E.g., see ST. I-II. 91. 1-2; 93. 1.

65. ST. I-II. 91. 2. [Especially the Reply to Objection 3].

66. ST. I-II. 1. 1.

67. ST. I-II. 91. 2. [See especially the Reply to Objection 2]

68. Ibid. “Every act of reason and will in us is based on that which is according to nature”.

69. ST. I-II. 94. 3.
70. In the “Treatise on Action”. [ST. I-II. 18. 5.]. Aquinas argues that the moral quality of an action is partly determined by the quality of the proximate deliberate end which it pursues. In the “Treatise on the Last End”. [ST. I-II. 1. 3. 6. 10. 1], he argues that all deliberate ends are pursued for the sake of the ultimate human end. [a non-deliberate end comprising human fulfillment which is the “principle of action”, and which people “naturally desire”]. and that the quality of any deliberate end is determined according to its real, as opposed to merely apparent, conduciveness to the non-deliberate end, for “...the last end stands in relation to things appetible, as the first principles of demonstration to things intelligible”. Finally, in the “Treatise on Law”. [ST. I-II. 91. 2; 94. 2.]. Aquinas argues that the natural law, insofar as it “has a share of the Eternal Reason” in the rational creature, inclines such a creature to its “proper act and end”, i.e., its ultimate end, and that it is the natural law, which comprises the principles of practical reason, “stands in relation to practical matters, as the first principles to matters of demonstration”.

71. See note #91 to Section Four.

72. ST. I-II. 90. 2. Of course, from one perspective, Aquinas’ position in this regard is certainly in keeping with the general modern deontological conception of what constitutes rectitude in action. The first principles of morality, he argues, are laws; and the rectitude of actions is defined in terms of their conformity to such laws. However, St. Thomas’ deontological conception of morality is ultimately grounded in a more basic teleological conception. The laws with which action must conform are derived from, and justified by the directives to the pursuit of non-deliberate ends which are the starting points of all deliberate behaviour. It is these non-deliberate ends which are at the heart of Aquinas’ conception of the “common good”. In fact, it seems that Aquinas uses the expression “common good” in two co-extensive senses. In one sense, it simply denotes the “good” or end of the collective: what is to the advantage of the whole human community. In a more strict sense, however, it denotes the good or end common to all; that to which all are directed individually, which is the same in reference to the good of the community, as it is the good common to each of its members.

73. ST. I-II. 10. 1.

74. ST. I-II. 91. 2.

75. ST. I-II. 94. 2.

76. ST. I-II. 94. 4-6.

77. See note #34 to Section Three.

78. Of course, that God exists and that He is the Creator is presupposed by this argument. I shall explicate why, according to Aquinas. God must exist and must be the source of all existence in Section 5.

79. If God intended any end apart from Himself in His Act of creating, this would imply an idea in God’s mind distinct from Himself, which contradicts the Divine Simplicity. [See note #57].

80. ST. I. 19. 1-3. 10. Aquinas shows that God created freely, i.e. that He did not create of necessity. There are a variety of arguments supporting this conclusion; e.g., the contrary view would be repugnant to the Divine Necessity, as it would contradict the infinity of God which this entails by implying that He is necessarily limited to the act of creation, and necessarily bound to a relation with creatures. Again, this point will be developed further in Section 5.

81. The point is subtle and easily overlooked. Since creatures are created, and so exist for the sake of the end of imitating God in finite form of necessity, they are of necessity by or nature directed to this end, [it defines their existence]. Furthermore, since, as seen, from the standpoint of that which is directed toward it, an end is “what ought to be”, [i.e. is prescribed], it follows that insofar as creatures are directed by necessity to the end of imitating God, that end is “what ought to be”, [i.e. is prescribed], from the standpoint of the creature. Indeed, this prescription is implicit within the nature of a creature qua creature. Such an argument will be explained in greater detail in Section 5.

82. While this implies that the vicious are acting for such an end as well, it does not render the point vacuous. As explained in Section 3, the vicious are indeed acting for the same end as the virtuous, but badly; i.e. [1]. By the wrong means. and/or [2]. According to the wrong specific conception. and/or [3]. According to the wrong hierarchy. and/or [4]. According to the wrong disposition by which they value too much or too little its constituent parts.

-289-
83. Although, again, that the end of imitating the Divine Essence in finite form ought to be pursued by people is implied by the fact that it is, of necessity, the human end. Insofar as it is the human end, it is from the human standpoint “what ought to be”. Hence, it is implicitly prescribed within human nature. [See note #81 above].

84. This point, of course, depends upon the soundness of the argument supporting the conclusion that God created deliberately. As stated above, I shall discuss this argument in Section 5.

85. As this would imply that there is an idea in God’s Mind distinct from himself. [See note #79 above].

86. Again, I shall explore why this is case in Section 5. The argument which shows that God exists and that He is the Creator implies that He is Pure Act or Necessary Being.

87. Hylomorphism is accepted by Aquinas from Aristotle. [See note #18 from Section 1, and note #14 from Section 5]

88. This point will be explored further in Section 5.

89. The philosophical psychology adopted by Aquinas from Aristotle involves the notion that what constitutes the nature or substantial form of an organic substance can be determined through the analysis of its behaviour. [i.e. from the analysis of its activities]. In this regard, human beings are observed to: [1]. grow and reproduce, like all organic substances; [2]. sense and move locally, like all animals; and [3]. think or reason, which is distinctively human. Activities, of course, imply abilities or powers, and so each of these human activities is argued to arise from a distinct power or faculty in human nature. The ability to reason, as distinctively human, is thus seen as the specific differentia of human nature among animal substances. See De Anima 412a3-412b20; ST. I. 77-78. This point will be revisited and developed in Section 5.

90. See ST. I. 79-82 for Aquinas’ view on the intellectual powers, how they imply an intellectual appetite or will, and the nature of the human will. Of course, that human beings engage in deliberate behaviour is apparent both from introspection and observation, and it is presupposed by a science of normative ethics.

91. With regard to the issue of whether, from the Kantian perspective, I have argued in support of a “hypothetical”. and not a “categorical ought” in my explication of what I take to be the true naturalism of Aquinas. I offer the following points by way of rebuttal and clarification. First, some definitions: By categorical ought I mean a duty or obligation or prescription admitting of no exceptions; one which is unconditional [regardless of conditions] [e.g. you ought to be honest unconditionally*]. In contrast, a hypothetical ought I mean a duty or obligation or prescription which is conditional, allegedly admitting of exceptions, [e.g. *if or since you desire such and such. you ought to do such and such*; in other words, you ought to do such and such to the extent that it fulfills your desire]. The term ought itself has, it seems to me, at least two senses: [1]. As a verbal noun - "an ought" - relative to an action is "something to be done": relative to an object, it is "something to be had". Thus, an ought denotes a prescription insofar as something prescribed is something to be done or had. [2]. As a verb, to say that something ought is to say that it "is to be done or had": that it "is to prevail or obtain". In this case, "is" represents the copula and "to be done or had" or " to prevail or obtain " is the predicate. To say that "something ought" is. then. to prescribe it. "To ought" is thus a verb conveying the condition whereby something is prescribed. Of course, I have demonstrated within the present section that an "end" or "good" is "something to be done or had", and so is implicitly prescribed by that oriented toward it. Thus, an "end" and an "ought" [along with the means to an end] are the same in reference. It is on this basis that I described an end as what ought", and that which is teleological as implicitly normative.

Now Kant argues [Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals 400-420; Abbott 17-30] that a hypothetical ought or “imperative” is insufficient for morality, and that it is never reducible to a categorical ought because insofar as it is conditional or hypothetical, it admits of contingency and exception and so does not obtain the necessity and universality required for morality. In other words, moral principles must be universal and absolute, and hypothetical imperatives, precisely as hypothetical, are not. For example, the hypothetical imperative: *if you want to be happy, then you ought to be honest*, implies that the prescription for honesty is not necessary but contingent upon the desire for happiness. Furthermore, the hypothetical imperative is said to admit of exceptions. For instance, one should be honest only on the condition that it will bring happiness, and on the condition that one desires to be happy. If either of these conditions does not prevail, then one should not be honest. Hypothetical imperatives are, therefore, insufficient for morality, and so Kant calls for categorical imperatives: absolute and universal moral obligations or prescriptions, [although, of course, according to Kant, there is ultimately only one
categorical imperative with which particular moral maxims are consistent. Hypothetical imperatives are irreducible to categorical ones: what is conditional cannot be rendered unconditional. Kant thus advances and advocates a strictly deontological ethic - a moral theory holding that the rectitude of actions is unconditional, or independent of their consequences. Any teleological ethic, according to Kant, advances merely hypothetical imperatives insofar as it maintains that the rectitude of actions is conditional on their consequences. The latter point raises what is in fact the main issue of debate between teleologists and deontologists: whether or not a "theory of right". a theory of what constitutes "rectitude in action", is to be contingent upon or derived from a "theory of good". or a theory of what constitutes the ends which comprise human flourishing. Deontologists. of course. argue that what is right is not contingent upon what is good. e.g. Kant's categorical imperative. Teleologists argue the opposite. Personally. I find the idea that what is right can be independent of what is good nonsensical; and I touch upon this point in the Section Five [see note #2 to Section 5 below]. Actions are by definition goal-oriented: they aim. as Aristotle says. at deliberate ends - at goods. To consider the rectitude of action independently of that which defines action seems illogical. Ethics is about the right and wrong of the pursuit of deliberate ends - the pursuit of goods. Hence. it makes no sense to argue that right can be. or is. independent of good. But to base a theory of right on a theory of good. to make right dependent on good. would seem to result only in hypothetical imperatives or hypothetical oughts. How. then. can one establish categorical imperatives? My solution. which is really Saint Thomas' solution. involves establishing categorical imperatives within a theory of good from which to derive them for a theory of right How? Most fundamentally. I establish that there are certain ends to which human beings are directed of necessity. ends which together constitute the ultimate human end. [happiness]. From here. one can proceed in either of two ways. I explore both.

Way # 1: I demonstrate analytically that since from the standpoint of that which is directed to an end. the end is what ought to be. i.e. something to be done or had]. it follows that the overall end to which human beings are directed of necessity is what ought to be from the human standpoint. In other words. from one's standpoint as a human being. one ought to be happy. or one ought to realize one's end. From here. I demonstrate that since that to which human beings are directed of necessity is what ought to be from the human standpoint. it follows that it is necessarily and universally what ought to be from that standpoint. thus fulfilling the criteria of a categorical imperative or categorical ought. In other words. since human beings are directed to a certain end [happiness] unconditionally. this is unconditionally what ought to be. or an unconditional ought from the human standpoint. An unconditional ought is a categorical ought. or a categorical imperative. Thus. that one. as a human being. ought to be happy is a categorical imperative demonstrable from the human being's necessary directive to the pursuit of happiness. From this directive it follows that from the the human standpoint it is a categorical imperative that what is human ought to be happy. Finally. I derive subsequent categorical imperatives from this basic one. i.e. that one. as a human being. ought to be happy. on the basis of what happiness is: its essence and constituent parts. and what is required for it. For example. very generally. I argue that since one. as a human being. ought to be happy. one ought to do what is required for happiness. This is one side of my argument. And I am not arguing here that if people want to be happy. they ought to do what is conducive to happiness. Rather. I am arguing that people ought to be happy. and so ought to do what is conducive to happiness. Or better still. I am arguing that since people ought to be happy. they ought to do what is conducive to happiness. This I believe is consistent with Saint Thomas' approach. The other side of my position I also believe is consistent with Thomistic arguments.

Way #2: here. I argue that since human beings are directed or oriented of necessity toward a certain end - the realization of natural potencies - their deliberate behavior [which is. by definition. end-driven. and which is governed by what is known as the operation of practical reasoning. or reasoning for the sake of action]. must itself be directed by practical principles rooted in that orientation and implicit in that operation. In other words. I argue that since human beings are directed of necessity to the pursuit of certain ends. that natural power by which they deliberately act for ends is rooted in this directive and governed by principles derived from it. As stated in Section 3. the reasoning behind this position is straightforward. Given that we do act. our actions are preceded by deliberation or practical reasoning. In other words. actions presuppose deliberation. But deliberation presupposes that we have ends which are not deliberate. [this is because deliberation assumes prior knowledge or awareness of some end]. Thus. deliberation is contradicted by the notion that all ends are deliberate: if all ends are deliberate. deliberation would never commence or arise. Hence. deliberation is consequent upon our being directed to certain ends about which we do not deliberate. and upon our being naturally aware of the directives to pursue them. These directives constitute the principles of deliberation or practical reasoning. The first is based upon or derived from the general end orientation of our nature. and simply prescribes our pursuit of ends. and avoidance of their contrary. Subsequent principles are based upon or derived from the first principle and from the specific ends presented to us by natural inclinations; these principles specify which general ends we are to pursue. the contraries of which we are to avoid.

-291-
Such principles or prescriptions are unconditional: we do not deliberate about them, but deliberate from them. They are necessary and universal: derived from the fact that we are directed of necessity to the pursuit of certain ends: the realization of our natural potencies. Hence, in Kantian terms, such principles amount to "categorical imperatives". and as such, further categorical imperatives can be deduced from them.

92. To the objection that this position contradicts Grisez's argument ("The First Principle of Practical Reason", pp. 374-375) that "is to be" is not the predicate but the gerundive *copula* of the FPPR. since the latter is a prescriptive not a descriptive statement. [an argument with which I concur], the following reply can be made. First. I am not alleging that "is to be" is the predicate of the FPPR. Rather, I am stating that "to be pursued and done", and "to be avoided" respectively are the predicates of the propositions comprising the FPPR. and that "is" constitutes the *copula* in those propositions. Secondly, while my position does permit that the FPPR can be construed as a descriptive statement, [i.e. as one which defines good and evil in their generic senses], the same position also allows that the FPPR can be construed as a prescriptive statement, [i.e. as one which directs practical reason to the pursuit of ends, and to the avoidance of their contraries]. This is because the predicates "to be done and pursued" and "to be avoided" essentially *describe* the normative or prescriptive quality of their respective subjects. In other words, the propositions comprising the FPPR are really synonymous with the propositions "Good is *something* to be done and pursued", and "Evil is *something* to be avoided". This renders those propositions both descriptive and prescriptive, [i.e. they describe what they prescribe]. The propositions both direct reason to the pursuit and performance of good, and the avoidance of evil, as well as define the generic senses of good and evil: good as that which denotes an end. and evil as that which denotes the contrary of an end. This double meaning in the FPPR brings me to my third point. My view of the FPPR is consistent both with Aquinas' teaching, and with Grisez's interpretation of it. Aquinas argues that the first principles of practical reasoning and theoretical reasoning are distinguished by the different objects of these operations: Grisez agrees with him in this regard. The principle of non-contradiction is derived from the primary object of intellection – being. For Aquinas, the principle captures the most fundamental sense of what it means for something to exist. In contrast, the FPPR is derived from the primary object of deliberation – the good: as Aquinas says, the principle "is one founded on the notion of good, viz. that *good is that which all things seek after*" [i.e. the principle is founded on the notion that the term good fundamentally denotes an end]. This implies that according to Aquinas, the FPPR not only prescribes the pursuit and performance of the good, it also simultaneously captures the nature of the good as an end. i.e. the FPPR defines the good! And it defines it precisely in prescribing its pursuit and performance! And needless to say, it makes perfect sense that the FPPR should not only prescribe the good, but also describe it. For if practical reason is, by definition, oriented to the pursuit of the good, its first principle must not only facilitate this orientation, it must facilitate the concept of the good itself.

93. Were this not the case, as explained in Section 3, practical reasoning could never commence or arise. Deliberation or practical reasoning presupposes a natural awareness of directives to non-deliberate ends. [the principles of practical reasoning], since all deliberation assumes prior knowledge of some end. and so is contradicted by the notion that all ends are deliberate. Natural awareness of the FPPR, which expresses the general human directive to the pursuit of ends, is thus the most basic presupposition of all practical reasoning in which the principle is implicit.

94. Ibid.

95. In Section 5, I shall argue that, strictly speaking, the same is true even of the FPPR. as the formation of the latter depends upon the existence of the general inclination to act in human beings.

96. ST. I-II. 94. 2.

97. Alan Donagan appears to endorse such an approach, at least in part, when he speaks of the foundations of a "common morality". (The Theory of Morality. Chicago: University of Chicago. 1977. pp. 210-229.)
1. ST. I-II. 1. 1.

2. Normative ethics has as its object the determination of, and subsequent prescription for how human beings ought to engage in deliberate behaviour, or what Aristotle calls praxis. [see EN 1094a5-7; 1139a20; EE 1222b20:1224b5]. In other words, normative ethics has as its object of the determination of objective and universal principles by which to distinguish correct action from incorrect action. All such action is, by definition, purposeful or goal-oriented: as Aristotle states at the outset of the Nicomachean Ethics:

Every craft and every investigation, and likewise every action and decision, seems to aim at some good [i.e. at some agathos: deliberate end]. [1094a1-3]

Consequently, it follows that insofar as the object of normative ethics is the determination of the principles governing correct action, and insofar as every action aims at an agathos or deliberate end, the object of normative ethics is the determination of the principles governing the pursuit of deliberate ends. In other words, to the extent that normative ethics is concerned with actions, and actions are concerned with ends, normative ethics is concerned with ends; i.e. it is teleological. This is perhaps the most definitive argument for the legitimacy of a teleological approach to ethics, as opposed to a strictly deontological approach. See also: Vernon J. Bourke, Ethics, [New York: Macmillan, 1951], pp. 27-30.

3. EN 1094a7-1094b12; ST. I-II. 1. 3.5.

4. EN 1094a7-22; ST. I-II. 1. 4. In the Metaphysics, [994a3]. Aristotle demonstrates that an infinite regress in causality, or in a series of causes ordered to each other, is impossible, as it would result in the negation of causality itself. And he shows that this applies equally to each of the four kinds of causes which he discovers, i.e. those mentioned in Section I. Again, the line of reasoning which reaches this conclusion is quite straightforward. Aristotle argues that an infinite regress in causes ordered to each other results only in an ongoing series of intermediary causes through which a causal relation needs to be wrought: and so without an ultimate cause, there is no causal activity in the series. For example, in a linear series of ordered causes and effects, whereby any object X is the immediate cause of Y, so that Y is the immediate cause of Z, so that Z is the immediate cause of P, Aristotle observes that the correct answer to the question, "What is the cause [source] of P?" is not Z, but X. This is because it is only on account of the causal activity of X that P has been effected at all. In such a series, Y and Z serve merely as intermediary causes through which the causal activity of X bears on P. Without X, P would not be effected: P would not exist. It is not, then, Y and Z which are the source of P, but X. Consequently, if this series of causes were to be extended infinitely, whereby X was caused by R so as to effect Y, and R by S, and S by T, and so on, the result would be a series of empty, intermediary causes bearing no causal activity themselves, so that P would never actually be effected; it would never actually be caused. Aristotle is able to prove that human action must have an ultimate goal by applying this argument specifically to his theory of final causality. [EN 1094a18-22]. His point is that an infinite series of final causes, [goals or ends], results in nothing more than an empty series of intermediary final causes or "means". [i.e. intermediary or derivative goals], but no actual goal! In other words, Aristotle shows that if each human act does not have an ultimate goal, if it does not pursue something for its own sake, then it does not have a goal at all. Furthermore, he argues that since this contradicts the nature of a deliberate act which, by definition, is goal-oriented; and since human beings do act deliberately, it follows that each human act has an ultimate goal. Once again, the explanation of the line of reasoning in the above argument is straightforward. If any action X pursues a goal Y, so as to obtain a goal Z, so as to obtain a goal P, and so on, ad infinitum, an action X is not actually pursuing any actual goal, because the infinite series provides only an empty, intermediary series through which it pursues nothing, [or through which it is caused to pursue nothing]. The series is a road with no end, no destination: subsequently, the act of travelling it cannot have a purpose or destination. And yet, this contradicts the nature of a deliberate act. Of course, it may be objected that a road need not be deliberately travelled for the sake of reaching any final destination; the reason for travelling may simply be the journey, or the act of travelling itself. But rather than offering a serious critique of Aristotle's argument, such an objection serves only to confirm it. The objection is actually conceding that there is an ultimate goal pursued by the deliberate act of travelling an endless road: the ultimate goal of journeying! Indeed, Aristotle's point is that a goal need not have any temporal limitation to be ultimate; it need only have a formal limit; i.e. it must be sought for its own sake, and have a definite nature, and
an infinite series of goals is not sought for its own sake, and does not have such a nature.

5. EN 1097a15-1097b22; See also: Terence Irwin: “Stoic and Aristotelian Conceptions of Happiness”. The Norms of Nature - Studies In Hellenistic Ethics. Malcolm Schofield, Gisela Striker. eds. [New York: Cambridge University Press. 1986.] pp. 205-244. By “self-sufficient and complete”. Aristotle means an ultimate goal or good is, by nature, pursued merely for its own sake and for nothing beyond it, and that it must be "lacking in nothing". These are qualities which are implied by the ultimate status of such a goal. Clearly, if a goal is pursued for the sake of something further, then it is not ultimate, but rather, that for which it is pursued bears this characteristic. For similar reasons, an ultimate goal must be lacking in nothing. This is because if an ultimate goal is lacking in anything, is not truly ultimate, since there exists something more to be pursued; i.e. whatever it is lacking. Thus, it is only a goal which lacks nothing which is truly ultimate.

6. ST. I-II. 1. 5.

7. ST. I-II. 3.

8. ST. I-II. 1. 5. The observation that an ultimate goal must be both self-sufficient and complete implies that the terminus or ultimate goal of any particular human act, although it is ultimate in the sense of being pursued purely for its own sake, is not ultimate in the sense of lacking in nothing, unless it comprises or exhausts all that the human being pursues for its own sake by way of action. Otherwise, such a goal is not self-sufficient. and this notion implies that the ultimate goal of human life must comprise the set of goals which a human being pursues for their own sake, or all the specific goals comprising the “general human good”. [See: EN 1097b2:1174a4]. More importantly, the observation that an ultimate goal must be self-sufficient and complete also suggests that if there is an objective and universal ultimate goal of human life, then it must bear such qualities. Thus, to show that there exists such a goal one must show that there is something which each human being qua human pursues merely for its own sake and for nothing further, and that this something is, from the human standpoint qua human, lacking in nothing, or that it fulfills or completes a human life or human being qua human. This is why Aristotle names what he regards as the objective and universal ultimate goal of human life eudaimonia, [EN 1095a18], a term which is best translated, as said previously, as “flourishing” of “being complete”.

9. ST. I-II. 1. 7: 2. 2. This is a position advanced by Aristotle, either implicitly or explicitly, throughout the Nicomachean Ethics. See: EN 1095b17-20: 1174b14-1176a30; 1167b16-1168a27.


11. EN 1077b24-1078a20.

12. E.g. ST. I-II. 94.

13. This Aristotelian natural philosophy is adopted or advanced by Aquinas, either implicitly or explicitly, in various works: e.g. in An Introduction To The Philosophy of Nature, De Ente et Essentia [esp. Chapters 2-3]; within “The Treatise On Creation” [esp. ST. I. 44-48]; within “The Treatise on the Work of the Six days” [esp. ST. I. 66-67]; and of course, within “The Treatise On Man” [esp. ST. I. 75-77].

14. Aristotle argues that the natural world is comprised of objects which are composites of the principles of matter [hyle] and form [morphe]. [Physics 225a1-225b9; Metaphysics 1029a20-26: 1042a27-28]. It is this hylomorphic account of nature which enables Aristotle to explain how the change and plurality in it are possible. Aristotle explains that change involves the reduction of what is potential, [an underlying subject, or material principle], to what is actual, [form], as a result of an external act causing an exigency or privation in the underlying subject whereby such a reduction is required by it. The form or attribute which such a subject gains via the change does not "come from nowhere", but from the subject's capacity to bear it, and the external cause acting upon the subject and creating in it an exigency to realize this capacity. Furthermore, the form or attribute lost by the subject via the change does not "go to nowhere", but is reduced simultaneously from being actually borne by the subject, to being potentially borne by it when the subject's capacity for bearing a form contrary to it is reduced to actuality. The theory of hylomorphism also explains how it is possible for many individual physical objects to exist, and how the similarities and differences between these objects can be explained without contradiction. In Aristotle's account of change, matter is identified as the ultimate underlying subject of change: it is matter which is potential, and hence, it is matter which undergoes the reduction to act, [i.e. to a form], which constitutes a change, and results in the actual existence of that form in an individual physical object. What the latter point suggests, of course, is that it is on
account of matter that form can exist individually, i.e. that form is instantiated or individualized. As Aristotle explains, the forms or attributes of physical objects, considered in themselves, are not individual but universal; they are predictable of many. [Metaphysics 1038b1-1039b9]. Consequently, the principle of matter in physical objects is not only the principle of potency, which allows for the possibility of change in the objects, but the principle of individuation, and this ultimately explains why physical objects can exist individually: matter combined with form results in form individuated. It is the individuating character of matter, along with its status as potential, i.e. as perpetually receptive of form, which explains how it is possible for a world of individuals with similar and differing attributes to exist simultaneously. Physical objects are matter/form composites, or matter actualized by forms resulting in forms individuated in matter. Hylomorphism explains plurality in terms of how, as it were, the same matter comprising reality, as receptive of form, individuates a plurality of forms simultaneously. Just as, for instance, an individual physical object can manifest a multiplicity of individuated forms or attributes simultaneously, as a consequence of the potentiality of the material principle in the object, the receptivity of matter in relation to form, and the individuating character of matter, so the whole of the physical world, as material, can manifest a multiplicity of individual matter/form composites due to the potentiality of matter comprising it, and the individuating character of matter. On this view, the differences between individual physical objects are explained in terms of the differences between being in potency in physical objects, and being in act in those objects. or better still, in terms of how the potency of matter is actualized in some individuals, and remains unactualized in others.

15. Categories 1b25-4b19; Physics 192b8-33: 224a22-226b20; Metaphysics 1017b17-25: 1025a14-20: 1026a33-1027a28: 1043a29-1043b14: 104a15-1045a6: 1049b4-1051a3. Aristotle holds that the natural world is divisible into two general kinds of being or actuality, and two general kinds of change: substantial and accidental. In terms of being, the substantial has two senses: a primary and secondary sense. Substance primarily denotes that which actually exists independently and discretely, or which is an actual undivided or cohesive whole or unit. Substance secondarily denotes a substantial form [ousia]: that by which something is an actual or discreet thing of some kind, or an actually undivided or cohesive unit of some kind. Hence, a substantial form is a form individuated in matter which results in a kind of substance: an actually separate or discreet kind of thing. A substantial form enacts matter directly, which means that a substantial change, [the reduction of potency to act of a substantial form], has as its underlying subject what Aristotle calls Prime Matter, [pure potentiality, or uninformed matter], and results in a new kind of substance. This is possible because substantial changes are instantaneous, meaning that Prime Matter never exists without a substantial form. According to Aristotle, accidents and accidental changes are both contrary and logically posterior to substances and substantial changes. An accident denotes an attribute or form individuated in matter which does not result in a substance, but must inhere in, and so presupposes a substance. Hence, substances underlie and are logically independent of accidents. This means that accidental forms do not enact matter directly, but matter already enacted by a substantial form. And this means that substantial forms underlie accidental changes, [the reduction of potency to act of accidental forms in matter], and that substances remain self-identical throughout accidental changes, [which is, of course, not the case with substantial changes].

16. Aristotle calls a substantial form an entelecheia or a "first actuality". [See: Metaphysics 1042b19-1043a28: De Anima 412a22-28]. Insofar as a substantial form enacts or informs Prime Matter directly, it is the first act of a substance. An accidental form, in contrast, represents a kind of second actuality: it enacted matter which is first enacted substantially. Since a substantial form is the first actuality of an actual discrete matter/form composite or natural substance, i.e. its "entelecheia", it defines or limits the pure potentiality of Prime Matter to specific potencies which thereby define the substance itself, placing it into its specific class of matter/form composites. It is the specific potencies which define a natural substance, resulting from its substantial form, which Aristotle calls dunameis. [See: Metaphysics 1045b27-1048b36], signifying the powers, capabilities, or capacities the substance has as a consequence of its substantial form. The dunameis dispose a substance to specific "second actualities" or energeiai, those which realize or are correlative to the capacities which comprise the dunameis.[Ibid] In other words, the latter determine not just what a particular substance is, but what it can become as a particular kind of natural substance: how it can change, and what attributes it will bear under certain conditions. [See also: Physics 192b8-33: 198b10-199b34: Metaphysics 1014b16-1015a19: 1070a31-1071b2]

17. ST. 1. 78.

18. ST. 1-II. 3. 2: With the qualification that eudaimonia in this life is "imperfect".

19. Metaphysics 1075a11-1076a4. See also note #7 from Section 3.
20. See note #14 and note #15 above. In Aristotle’s hylomorphic account of the physical world, form is the principle of actuality in a thing; it is the extent to which something has form that it is in act. Given that this is the case, and given that a substance in its primary sense is by definition something which is actually one, or an actual undivided or cohesive whole, it follows that it must have a form by which it is rendered such. And since such a form is, in fact, that by which something is actually substantial. Aristotle names it a substantial form. The latter are what confer actual independence, actual discreetness, and actual unity or cohesiveness upon substances. It is partly for this reason that Aristotle regards substantial forms as “a principle of stability or unity” [see Physics 192b8-23: Metaphysics 1043a29-1043b14]. A substance is unified, and so undivided and stable as a substance precisely because it has a substantial form. In other words, a thing exists independently and discreetly insofar as it has a substantial form. A thing is also a thing of a certain kind precisely because it has substantial form. Again, in Aristotle’s theory of hylomorphism, forms in nature correspond to the individuated attributes of physical objects. Forms determine what a physical object is in actuality: i.e. what attributes it actually bears. From this it follows that if there are substantial forms, or forms individuated in matter by which substances qua substances actually exist in nature, then these forms represent what the substances are precisely as substances. In other words, if a form in general is not only that by which something is an act, but also that which determines what something actually is, [i.e. what attributes it actually bears], then a substantial form is not only that by which a substance is in act, but also that which determines what the substance is, [i.e. what attributes the substance actually bears qua substance]: its kind, nature, or quiddity. Indeed, insofar as a substance has a substantial form it bears an attribute which not only makes it a substance, but which defines it qua substance, or which makes it a kind of substance. Simply put, all forms are quidditative; all answer the question “what is it?” Thus, a substantial form, which renders something actually substantial, is also quidditative: it answers the question “what substance is it?” . [see Categories 2a13-20].

21. DEE 1. 3.

22. Ibid. Of course, in the case of a natural substance, the latter is, by definition, a composite of matter and form. And so Aquinas concludes that the essence refers not just to the form, but to the form and matter of a natural substance. In this regard, he makes a distinction between “signate matter”, [i.e. matter as the principle by which form is individuated], and the concept of matter itself as a principle of both potentiality and individuation. It is the latter which he says enters into the definition of a natural substance.

23. DEE 4. 6.


25. See note #14 above.

26. DEE 4. 7.


28. DEE 4. 7.

29. See note #15 above. and note #17 from Section 1.


32. Ibid. pp. 323-337.

33. DEE 4. 8.

34. DEE 4.7. See also: ST. I. 2. 3; ST. I. 44. 1. It should be noted that a debate has been raging between Joseph
Owens and John Wippel over whether the proof for the existence of God in the *De Ente* follows the proof for the real distinction between being and essence in all finite, plural, contingent or mutable entities, or whether the proof for the real distinction follows the proof for the existence of God. My position, which I hope to develop in future discussions, is that both of them can be construed as correct, so long as one is careful to make an important distinction - i.e., as explained in Section One, a distinction between "existential knowledge", or knowing that something is, and "essential knowledge", or knowing what it is. In this regard, it seems to me that Wippel is quite right in arguing that the proof *that* there exists a real distinction between being and essence in all finite, plural, contingent, or mutable entities precedes and is instrumental in the proof for the existence of God. On the other hand, I think that Owens is quite correct in arguing that the proof for the existence of God precedes and is instrumental in the proof for *what* the real distinction involves [i.e., the proof that being is related to essence as act to potency]. For Aquinas, only the latter demonstration would constitute a genuine *understanding* of the real distinction.

35. *ST.* I. 45. 5.

36. See note #4 above.


40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. *ST.* I. 14.

43. *Confessions* 11.

44. Curiously. Aristotle appears to make precisely this point in the *Physics* [22b4-14]. He did not, however, apply it in his attempt to understand the causal activity of the Prime Mover, and the question of whether the Prime Mover can be an efficient cause.

45. *ST.* I. 46. 1.

46. See note #56 from Section 4.

47. *ST.* I. 19. 3.

48. EN 1112a20-1112b15.

49. EN 1110a1-5: 1111a22-24.

50. A non-human animal, for example, is capable of voluntary movements, [EN 1111a24-1111b4] - i.e. it is able to move itself - but these movements occur of necessity; they are required of the animal insofar as they are dictated by the animal's instinct, environment, and/or conditioning. Animals do not choose to move; they do not *act* voluntarily. On the other hand, human beings can choose to move; they are able not only to move voluntarily, but to move deliberately: to act. However, not all of a human beings movements are deliberate; some human movements are of necessity. Furthermore, those human movements that are deliberate are limited to the means by which a human being moves toward what is of necessity to him. In contrast, all of God's acts are deliberate, except . [loosely speaking]. His act of willing Himself. [*ST.* I. 19. 3]. See also: note #53 below.

51. As Aquinas argues, [ST. I. 19. 3. 10], insofar as an agent wills an end of necessity, he wills of necessity the necessary means to this end. , but he does not will of necessity the means to his end which are not necessary to it: if he wills the latter, he does so freely. God wills Himself of necessity, [see note #65 from Section 4, and note #53 below], and He wills creation as a means to this end. [see pp. 41-42 from Section 4]. However, creation is not a necessary means to God's end, since He is complete, [as Infinite Being], and wholly self-possessed without creation. Hence, insofar as God wills creation. He does so freely.

52. *ST.* I. 19. 3. 7; *ST.* I. 46. 1.

-297-
53. Aquinas argues that there are two senses of necessity: [1]. absolute, and [2]. by supposition. [ST. I. 19. 3]. That God wills Himself, Aquinas argues, is absolutely necessary, but that God wills creation is necessary only by supposition, since creation is not a necessary means to the necessary end of God's will. [See note #53 above]. However, the latter argument still seems somewhat problematic, because the Divine Simplicity requires that there can be no real distinction between God's Will and God's Act of creation, and there seems to be a real distinction between what is absolutely necessary, and what is necessary only by supposition. Hence, I believe that Aquinas has stated this argument imprecisely. There are indeed two senses of necessity which must be distinguished to settle this matter, and these are more precisely stated as: [1]. what cannot be otherwise, and [2]. what is required or needed. God's act of creation, and indeed all of his acts, are necessary in the first sense, but not in the second. Creation, in particular, is an act which cannot be otherwise since God cannot be otherwise, and His act cannot be really distinct from Him. It is not required or needed, because God is in no way exigent to the act of creation, or to any act. except [loosely speaking], the act of willing Himself. But rather than limiting God's acts in anyway, the latter fact testifies to how He is unlimited in His acts, or how He is essentially deliberate in His acts, since He is Infinite Being and wholly self-possessed. More specifically, God does not just act deliberately. He is Deliberate Act: He does not just will. He is Will; as God is infinite. His acts are limited only by Himself; they are wholly in His control. Of course. God's creative act, and indeed His act of existence and act of willing Himself are, from the standpoint of the creature, acts of necessity in the second sense; they are required by the creature, [ST. I. 19. 3; ST. I. 45. 1]. But strictly speaking, they are not required by God: He does not receive them from anything else, and He is in no way exigent to them, and this applies even to His act of willing Himself, for what is never absent from its end is never exigent to it, and God is never absent from Himself, and so He is not exigent even with respect to His act of willing Himself. Although that He wills Himself cannot be otherwise. Indeed, although insofar as He wills, God can and must only will Himself. He is infinite, and so His will is infinite and its object is infinite. All of God's acts, then, are necessary acts in that they cannot be otherwise; but they are not acts of necessity; they are not, strictly speaking, required by God, or needed by Him. [This is, of course, most difficult to understand in the case of God's act of existence. God exists necessarily, but He does not exist of or from necessity. in the sense that He came into existence necessarily, since He did not come into existence at all. God's act of existence is subsistent - uncaused and wholly independent of all, i.e. it depends upon nothing. An uncaused, and wholly independent act cannot be an act which is required or which is of necessity, since an act which is required is an act dependent upon or stemming from its requirement; i.e. it is an act which arises from an exigency. [ST. I. 19. 5]. As uncaused and wholly independent, God's act of existence is therefore at least analogous to a deliberate act. insofar as a deliberate act is independent of, or not caused by anything extrinsic to the agent, but wholly directed by the agent, and so is neither an act of necessity nor an act of chance. However, deliberate acts as experienced by human beings are always contingent, i.e. they can be otherwise; they are caused or generated by their agents. This is not the case with any of God's acts: His acts are neither contingent, since they cannot be otherwise nor. strictly speaking, are they caused by Him, in the sense that they are generated or preceded by a causal act in Him. From this it follows that neither contingency nor causality are essential to a deliberate act: it does not have to be an act which can be otherwise, nor an act resulting from some prior act or an act which is generated. These qualities appear to apply only to deliberate acts which involve the reduction of potencies in the agent, for such acts must be contingent and generated. But this is due to the agent, not the act. Hence, it is not the fact that it is contingent and generated which makes an act deliberate: these are incidental to it. This means that a deliberate act is, in essence, an independent act, i.e. it is independence which renders an act deliberate. As a result, it is more accurate to say that God's acts are truly deliberate. since they are wholly independent, and human acts which are only analogously deliberate, since the fact that they can be otherwise, and are generated renders them only relatively independent. In other words, a deliberate act is, in essence, an act of an agent which is independent of all extrinsic factors, of all exigency. and of all chance; only God's acts qualify as such].

54. This does not mean, of course, that what God creates must be eternal, or that there must be an eternal creation. As seen, God cannot create another God, which means that creation itself cannot be rendered so as to exist necessarily or independently. Furthermore. Aquinas argues that from the standpoint of reason, it neither can be proved nor disproved that the natural world has a beginning and an end. It is within God's power to will either that the natural world should be everlasting, or that it should have a finite duration, [ST. I. 46. 1-2]. Either way, as seen, it will be eternally present to God.

55. See pages 152-154; 158-161; 170-173 from Section 4, and accompanying notes. See also: ST. I. 4; ST. I. 6.

56. ST. I. 6. 1.
57. See note #45 from Section 4.

58. To the objection that the end of realizing specific capacities is too broad to serve as the basis for a science of ethics, since it would seem that any human activity, whether perceived as virtuous or vicious, realizes human capacities, apparently rendering it impossible to base specific moral principles upon such an end, the following reply can be made. It is indeed true that whatever one does as human realizes human capacities; but it is also true that such capacities, whose realization constitutes the constituent parts of the ultimate human end, can be realized either well or badly. In other words, we can be pursuing the human good either well or badly. The better it is pursued, obviously the more good will be achieved, and the more fulfilled will the human being become. Thus, the question ultimately boils down to a virtue ethic: Virtue constituting the well pursuit of the human end, and vice constituting its ill pursuit. e.g. the pursuit of the end by the wrong means, according to the wrong specific conception, the wrong hierarchy etc. The general point is that whatever people do, they do for their ultimate end; they have a choice, however, in terms of how responsibly, or how well, they pursue it. This is the difference between virtue and vice.

59. See notes #15, #16, and #20 above.

60. ST. I. 5. 1.

61. More specifically, while a substantial form itself is the first act of a natural substance, there are specific second actualities of that form which can be construed as realizing it further. The first actuality of a natural substance determines its kind: the second actualities determine whether it is complete - i.e. wholly in act - as a thing of that kind. Consequently, since natural substances are created to imitate God or Pure Act in finite form, they exist not merely for the sake of the first actualities of their forms as substances, but for the sake of the second actualities completing those forms. For example, just as Michelangelo has the first actuality of a sculptor, and so is distinguished from non-sculptors, and is defined as a sculptor, by virtue of his capacity for sculpting, so too. a natural substance has the first actuality of a substance of a specific kind, and so is distinguished from other kinds, and is defined as a specific kind, by virtue of the specific capacities it bears. And just as it is not through the first actuality of a sculptor by which Michelangelo is fully realized as a sculptor, but only through the second actuality, or act of sculpting, so too it is not through its first actuality that a natural substance is fully realized as a substance of a specific kind, but only through its specific second actualities.

62. ST. I-II. 90. 1-2. 4.

63. ST. I-II. 91. 1; ST. I-II. 93. 1-6. See also: ST. I. 15. 1-2; ST. I. 23. 1-4; ST. I. 44. 3-4.

64. ST. I. 44. 3.

65. ST. I. 91. 2.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

68. ST. I-II. 94. 2. 4.

69. This argument is not inconsistent with Thomistic naturalism. Human beings do not desire God because they formally know God, according to Aquinas. [ST. I. 2. 2.], [although a formal knowledge would only strengthen this desire]. Rather, human beings desire God, [and they desire Him of necessity], because God directs them to Him when He creates them for no other purpose that to imitate Him.

70. ST. I-II. 94. 2. 4.

71. Ibid.

72. See note #73 from Section 4.

73. Ibid.
Bibliography

PRIMARY TEXTS


-300-

**SECONDARY SOURCES**


