

Spinoza's Ethics: Perfectionism and Naturalism?
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Spinoza's *Ethics* is widely regarded as one of the masterpieces of seventeenth-century philosophy, yet it occupies a relatively minor place in most histories of ethics. One reason for this neglect is the difficulty of ascertaining exactly what sort of ethical theory Spinoza defends. More significantly, there are doubts about whether Spinoza's naturalistic metaphysics can support an adequate conception of moral agency and the normative commitments on which any plausible ethical theory depends. I present the case for understanding Spinoza's ethics as a species of perfectionism and assess the difficulties his naturalism raises for the defense of a coherent version of such a theory.