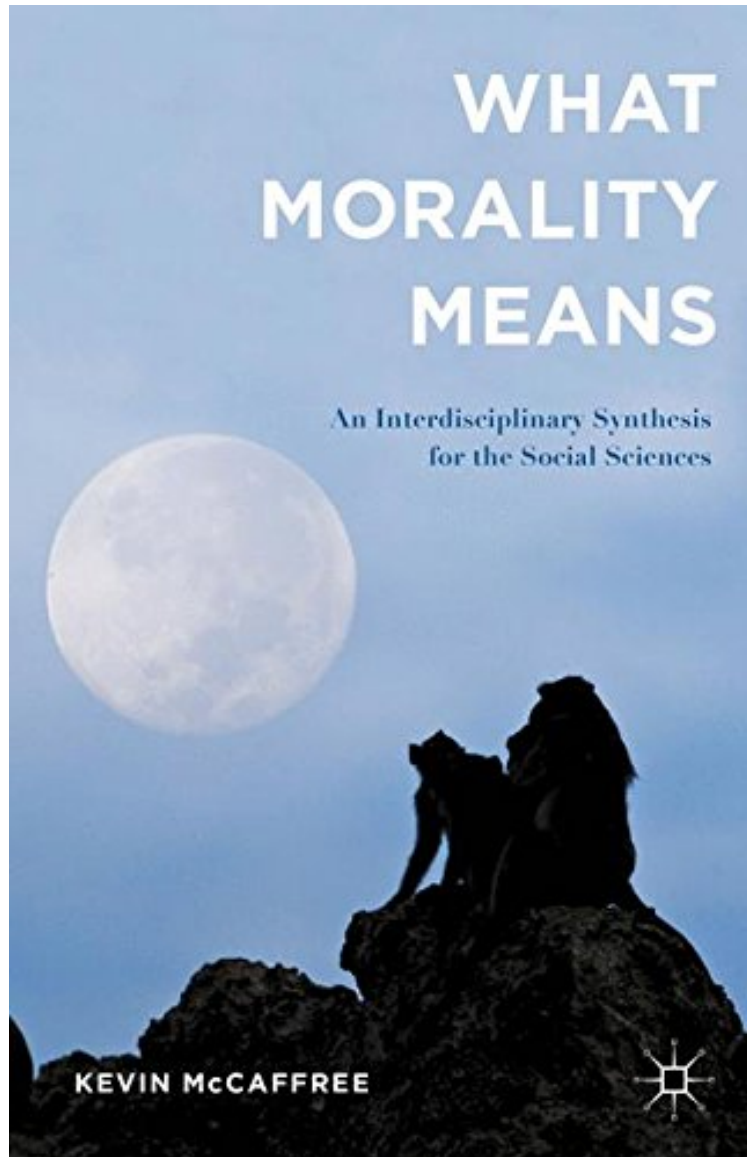


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What Morality Means: An Interdisciplinary Synthesis for the Social Sciences

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Interdisciplinary Synthesis for the Social Sciences:

What Morality Means examines the scientific theory of morality, drawing on zoological and physiological literatures in addition to contemporary sociological research on status and exchange. The theory roots morality in the capacity for perceptual overlap, and describes how perceptual overlap has been constrained and enabled in human history.

"What Morality Means by Kevin McCaffree breaks new ground in providing a scientific means for understanding the dynamics of morality. In very informal prose, the author reviews large literatures in physiology, zoology, neurology, experimental psychology and sociology, cognitive psychology, and anthropology. The goal is to offer a scientific way to analyze morality, but in the process of developing this approach, McCaffree pulls these fields together to present a unified conceptual approach to understanding morality from a sociological perspective. Nothing like this book has ever been written; and therefore, it is a must read for not only those interested in morality, per se, but for anyone interested in human beings and societies. The analysis is integrative and highly sophisticated, and yet, the writing style is so casual that it is easy to forget that one is reading a very profound analysis. Using the deceptively simple concept of 'perceptual overlap,' McCaffree outlines the conditions that increase or decrease this overlap; and from this deceptively simple idea, a whole new way of looking at morality from a scientific and sociological perspective emerges." - Jonathan H. Turner, University Professor, University of California, Riverside, USA "There is no more important topic today than morality, the scientific study of which has only recently become acceptable as legitimate, indeed even possible. Most scientists and scholars approach morality as either a social and cultural phenomenon or as an evolutionary and biological characteristic. Kevin McCaffree is the first to integrate both approaches in a unified explanation for why we are moral, and this book will take its rightful place in the canon of great works on this great subject." - Michael Shermer, Publisher, Skeptic magazine; Presidential Fellow, Chapman University, USA; Monthly Columnist Scientific American; author of The Moral Arc (2015) "This book convincingly argues that morality is central to the social sciences. Kevin McCaffree successfully places moral decision-making in the larger context of society and human evolutionary history." - Frans B. M. de Waal, author of The Bonobo and the Atheist; C. H. Candler Professor of Psychology, Emory University; Director, Living Links Center at the Yerkes National Primate Research Center and Distinguished Professor, University of Utrecht, The Netherlands About the Author Kevin McCaffree is a criminologist and sociologist of religion and morality.