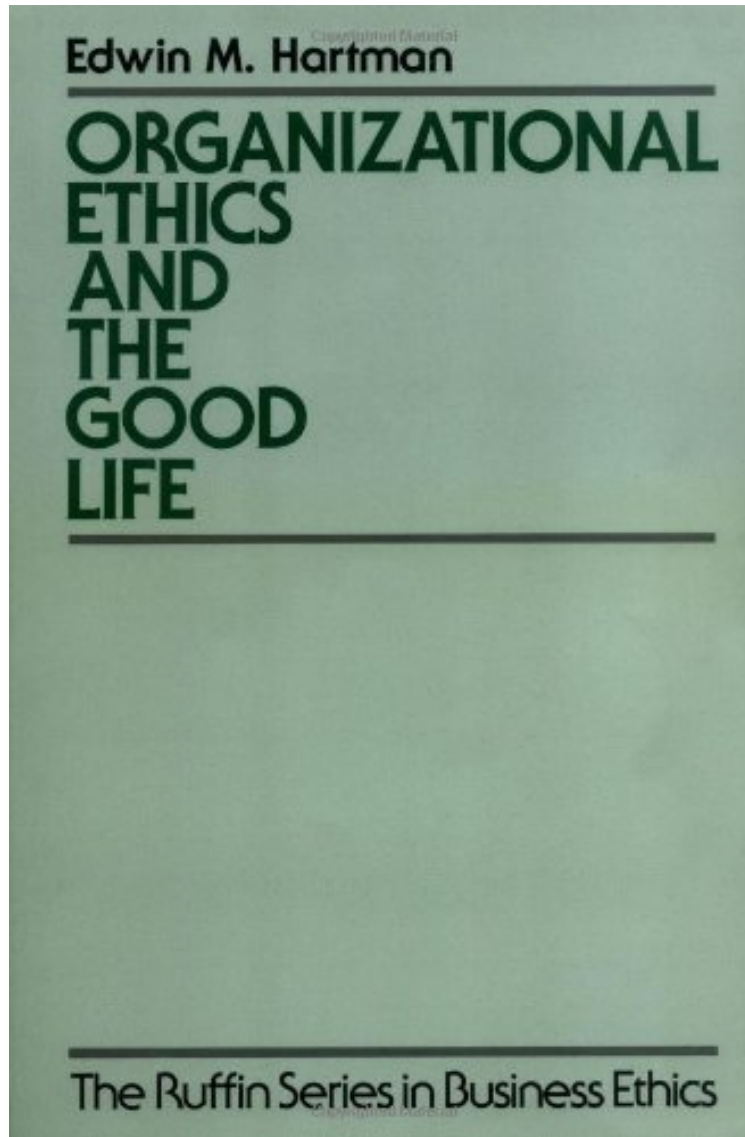


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## Organizational Ethics and the Good Life (The Ruffin Series in Business Ethics)

*Edwin Hartman*

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**Edwin Hartman : Organizational Ethics and the Good Life (The Ruffin Series in Business Ethics)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Organizational Ethics and the Good Life (The Ruffin Series in Business Ethics):

In giving an account of what is ethical, we can begin by describing the community that accommodates the good life; to

be ethical, then, is to be a contributor to that sort of community. We live in political communities as well as in communities built around families, neighborhoods, churches, and other associations. But for many of us the community that will afford the good life that is the purpose of morality is the organization that employs us. Aristotle claimed that the greatest ethical questions are political ones; today we have reason to believe that the greatest ethical questions are organizational ones. In *Organizational Ethics and the Good Life*, Edwin Hartman contends that, as ethics is about the good community, a great part of business ethics is about the good organization. He argues that a large and complex organization has the characteristic of the "commons" studied by game theorists, and that it is the task of management to preserve the commons in the long-term interests of all its members, principally by creating an appropriate corporate culture. A good corporate culture not only serves the interests of the participants but makes the organization a place in which they can develop interests that are compatible with both autonomy and good corporate citizenship: that is, they can develop a sense of the good life that is appropriate to the moral person. Hartman opposes the standard view that the study of organizational ethics is a matter of considering how certain foundational ethical principles apply in organizational settings; instead, he argues, business ethicists should consider how free and rational people arrive at a consensus on practical ethical principles in a morally good organization that leaves room for moral progress. And what makes an organization morally good? In discussing justice, loyalty, and other features of a morally good organization, Hartman draws largely on the work of Rawls and Hirschman. In describing the good life as one in which well-being and morality overlap, Hartman proposes a new version of an idea as old as Aristotle, who taught that human beings are rational but also irreducibly communal creatures.

"Hartman's book is a significant and welcome addition to the business ethics lexicon. [ . . . ] If philosophers are to continue to play a role in the business ethics dialogue, this is the kind of book a philosopher should be writing. It will be a rich and rewarding experience for those who read it and a useful text in a business ethics class."--Business Ethics Quarterly

"Ed Hartman's *Organizational Ethics and the Good Life* is one of the very best books yet written on business ethics. Drawing from a rich background in both management and philosophy Hartman paints us a picture of community, morality and culture in corporate life that is thoughtful, insightful and witty. This book is much recommended."--Robert C. Solomon, Department of Philosophy, University of Texas at Austin

"*Organizational Ethics and the Good Life* cleans the philosophic house of business ethics and offers a fresh new way of thinking about organizational life. Hartman presents one of the best critiques of ethical theory since MacIntyre's *After Virtue*. The book is philosophically important because Hartman manages to work through and then obliterate the line between applied and theoretical ethics. This book offers a unique and pragmatic twist on Aristotelian and communitarian theory that holds great promise for organizational life."--Joanne B. Ciulla, Chair in Leadership and Ethics, Jepson School of Leadership Studies, University of Richmond.

"This is a philosophically literate and managerially provocative treatise on organizational ethics....Hartman collects and contributes to an impressive array of reflection on both ethical theory and the conceptual anatomy of applied ethics. This kind of comprehensive philosophical thought, anchored in an understanding of organizations and management, is much needed in graduate-level applied ethics education."--Ethics

"[I]t is insightful both as an introduction to ethics and as an approach to business ethics."--Religious Studies

From the Back Cover

In *Organizational Ethics and the Good Life*, Edwin Hartman contends that, as ethics is about the good community, a great part of business ethics is about the good organization. He argues that a large and complex organization has the characteristic of the "commons" studied by game theorists, and that it is the task of management to preserve the commons in the long-term interests of all its members, principally by creating an appropriate corporate culture. A good corporate culture not only serves the interests of the participants but makes the organization a place in which they can develop interests that are compatible with both autonomy and good corporate citizenship: that is, they can develop a sense of the good life that is appropriate to the moral person. Hartman opposes the standard view that the study of organizational ethics is a matter of considering how certain foundational ethical principles apply in organizational settings; instead, he argues, business ethicists should consider how free and rational people arrive at a consensus on practical ethical principles in a morally good organization that leaves room for moral progress. And what makes an organization morally good? In discussing justice, loyalty, and other features of a morally good organization, Hartman draws largely on the work of Rawls and Hirschman. In describing the good life as one in which well-being and morality overlap, Hartman proposes a new version of an idea as old as Aristotle, who taught that human beings are rational but also irreducibly communal creatures.

About the Author Edwin Hartman is at Rutgers University.