

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910809149303321
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Titolo	Goodness & advice // Judith Jarvis Thomson ; [comments by] Philip Fisher ... [et al.] ; edited and introduced by Amy Gutmann
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Princeton, N.J., : Princeton University Press, 2003
ISBN	1-282-08746-0 9786612087462 1-4008-2472-9
Edizione	[Core Textbook]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (205 p.)
Collana	University Center for Human Values series
Altri autori (Persone)	FisherPhilip <1941-> GutmannAmy
Disciplina	170
Soggetti	Consequentialism (Ethics) Ethics
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Originally published: 2001.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Introduction / Gutmann, Amy -- Part One: Goodness / Thomson, Judith Jarvis -- Part Two: Advice / Thomson, Judith Jarvis -- Comments -- Comment / Fisher, Philip -- Comment / Nussbaum, Martha C. -- Comment / Schneewind, J. B. -- Comment / Smith, Barbara Herrnstein -- Reply to Commentators -- Reply to Commentators / Thomson, Judith Jarvis -- Contributors -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	How should we live? What do we owe to other people? In <i>Goodness and Advice</i> , the eminent philosopher Judith Jarvis Thomson explores how we should go about answering such fundamental questions. In doing so, she makes major advances in moral philosophy, pointing to some deep problems for influential moral theories and describing the structure of a new and much more promising theory. Thomson begins by lamenting the prevalence of the idea that there is an unbridgeable gap between fact and value--that to say something is good, for example, is not to state a fact, but to do something more like expressing an attitude or feeling. She sets out to challenge this view, first by assessing the apparently powerful claims of Consequentialism. Thomson makes the striking argument that this familiar theory must ultimately fail because its basic requirement--that people should act to

bring about the "most good"--is meaningless. It rests on an incoherent conception of goodness, and supplies, not mistaken advice, but no advice at all. Thomson then outlines the theory that she thinks we should opt for instead. This theory says that no acts are, simply, good: an act can at most be good in one or another way--as, for example, good for Smith or for Jones. What we ought to do is, most importantly, to avoid injustice; and whether an act is unjust is a function both of the rights of those affected, including the agent, and of how good or bad the act is for them. The book, which originated in the Tanner lectures that Thomson delivered at Princeton University's Center for Human Values in 1999, includes two chapters by Thomson ("Goodness" and "Advice"), provocative comments by four prominent scholars--Martha Nussbaum, Jerome Schneewind, Philip Fisher, and Barbara Herrnstein Smith--and replies by Thomson to those comments.
