

The Importance of Ideals.

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The central thesis is that we cannot fully understand, nor adequately guide normative practices without making references to ideals. Ideals should not be seen as the foundation of normative theories but as one element in a reflective equilibrium model, to be combined with other elements like principles, rules and concrete judgments. Recognition of ideals will result in better theories of law, morality and politics. Moreover, ideal-oriented approaches may also shed new lights on practical problems and on traditional theoretical controversies. Therefore, they will enrich our understanding of the reality of law, morality and politics and offer new perspectives for normative theory.