



# The Ethics of Tax Evasion: Perspectives in Theory and Practice

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Why do people evade paying taxes? This is the central question addressed in this volume by Robert McGee and a multidisciplinary group of contributors from around the world. Applying insights from economics, public finance, political science, law, philosophy, theology and sociology, the authors consider the complex motivations for not paying taxes and the conditions under which this behavior might be rationalized. Applying theoretical approaches as well as empirical research, *The Ethics of Tax Evasion* considers three general arguments for tax evasion: (1) in cases where the government is corrupt or engaged in human rights abuses; (2) where citizens claim inability to pay, unfairness in the tax system, paying for things that do not benefit the taxpayer, excessively high tax rates, or where taxes are used to support an unpopular war; and (3) through philosophical, moral, or religious opposition. The authors further explore these issues by asking whether attitudes toward tax evasion differ by country or other demographic variables such as gender, age, ethnicity, income level, marital status, education or religion. The result is a multi-faceted analysis of tax evasion in cultural and institutional context, and, more generally, a study in ethical dilemmas and rational decision making.

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#### About the Author

Robert W. McGee is Director of the Center for Accounting, Auditing and Tax Studies at Florida International University, where he teaches in financial accounting, management accounting, and taxation. He holds degrees in accounting, taxation, economics, law, philosophy, political science, and finance, and is a Certified Public Accountant, Certified Management Account, and Chartered Bank Auditor. He has lectured and consulted widely on such topics as public accounting and corporate taxation; he has advised officials at the United States Agency for International Development and the World Bank; and has advised on accounting law, standards, and education curricula in several countries, including Armenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, and Mozambique. A prolific author and editor, he has published over 500 scholarly papers and 50 books, including *Corporate Governance in Developing Countries*, *Accounting Reform in Transition and Developing Countries*, and *the Philosophy of Taxation and Public Finance* (all Springer). His research has been published in such journals as the *Journal of Business Ethics* (Springer), *Harvard International Law Journal*, *International Journal of Accounting*, *International Finance Review*, *Asian Economic Review*, and *International Journal of Social Economics*. He was ranked as top scholar for accounting ethics for the 35-year period 1968-2002 by *Research on Professional Responsibility and Ethics in Accounting*.

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