

THE ULTIMATE **CREDIT-BY-EXAM** STUDY GUIDE FOR:

# **Ethics in America**

**1<sup>st</sup> Edition**

04/19/2024

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# Introduction

In the United States, the DSST Ethics in America exam is a college level test that is part of the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) program. The exam covers ethical issues in American history, culture, and society. It is designed to measure a test taker's knowledge of the history and principles of ethical thought and action in the United States.

This study guide will help you to familiarize yourself with the terms you need to know for your exam. It is not a substitute for attending course classes, completing Moodle activities, and participating in practice exams.

# Exam Information

<p><b>Contemporary Foundational Issues 15%</b> 15 Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relativism, Subjectivism, Determinism, and Free Will.</li> <li>● Relationship between morality and religion</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ethical Traditions 35%</b> 35 Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Greek views: Thucydides, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Stoic, Epicureanism</li> <li>● Religious Traditions</li> <li>● Law and Justice: Epictetus, Aquinas, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Jefferson, Kant, Royce, King, Rawls, Nozick</li> <li>● Consequentialist Ethics: Epicurus, Smith, Bentham, Mill, Rand</li> <li>● Feminist/Womanist Ethics: Gilligan, Nodding</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ethical Analysis of Real World Issues 50%</b> 50 Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Morality, relationships, and sexuality (e.g., pornography, adultery, prostitution, LGBT)</li> <li>● Life and death issues (e.g., abortion, euthanasia, suicide, assisted suicide)</li> <li>● Economic issues (inequality, poverty, equal opportunity commodification)</li> <li>● Civil rights (racism, affirmative action)</li> <li>● Punishment (e.g., capital punishment, retributive justice)</li> <li>● War and peace (e.g., just war tradition)</li> <li>● Life centered and human centered ethics (e.g., animals, environmental issues)</li> <li>● Human rights</li> <li>● Biomedical ethics (e.g., experimentation, embryonic stem cell research, human subjects, organ donation)</li> </ul>

# Chapter 1: Morality & Ethics

## A. What is Morality, and Where Does Philosophy Fit In?

The word morality comes from the Latin root *mos*, meaning “custom.” The terms *morality* and *ethics* are often used interchangeably, and both words are broadly defined as having to do with right and wrong.

However, there is a difference: **Morality** refers to moral standards and moral conduct, while **ethics** refers to the formal study of those standards and conduct. For this reason, the study of ethics is also known as “moral philosophy.”

Essentially, you can define morality by looking through the lens of ethics. For most professionals, the philosophical study of morality is where you might find answers to your questions. For many in the field of ethics and morality, the definition of what is right and wrong can often be indistinguishable. However, we have two sides to ethics: **Normative and Descriptive Ethics**.

But where does philosophy fit in?

Philosophy can be broadly defined as the pursuit of wisdom through individual or group concepts or ideologies. However, the question of exactly what philosophy is can be complicated, and there are several answers to this question. In simple terms, philosophy is the study of how we think about the world and our place in it. Philosophy involves the pursuit of knowledge through methods such as art, politics, religion, logic, and metaphysics. Philosophy can also refer to a body of thoughts or a system of beliefs. It can also be used to analyze the origins of those thoughts and beliefs, and to understand the theories behind them. The study of ethics focuses on determining which behaviors are honorable. Philosophy, as a whole, helps to develop critical thinking skills.

The field of philosophy has seen many notable philosophers contribute to the expansion of minds and ideas over the years. Each philosopher has brought their own particular disciplines and principles to the table, helping to further the development of the four main branches of philosophy: metaphysics, epistemology, axiology, and logic. Due to the innovative contributions of renowned philosophers, such as Simone de Beauvoir and Pythagoras, tremendous progress has been made in the fields of feminism and mathematics, respectively. These individuals have helped pave the way for future generations, and their impact continues to be felt today.

Philosophical inquiry can be a useful tool in making decisions, as well as in understanding and navigating personal relationships and daily life.

## B. The Origins of Morality

Some individuals believe that morality is **universal**, meaning that principles of right and wrong are not specific to any one time period or culture but rather apply to all people. Those who believe in a universal morality believe its origins came from two sources, either from a divine or supernatural power, or from a religious system. Christianity is just one example in which a moral framework for humans was created by



a deity. Similarly, outside the context of religion, many philosophers believe that morality exists as a kind of superhuman entity.

Others maintain that morality is **relative** and that what is considered good or bad varies depending on the individual or group. The other way morals could be universal is if they were the result of evolution. Humans evolved these morals to help maintain strong social groups, prevent conflict, and make survival easier for themselves.

The opposing view in this debate is that morality is **subjective**. This perspective holds that morality is not universal; rather, it is created by humans and specific to the culture that created it. While morality is still important to individuals in society, defining social relations and cultural values, not everyone is bound by the same morals.

Throughout the following chapter, you will gain a better understanding of the different branches of ethics, such as Descriptive Ethics, Normative Ethics, Meta-Ethics, and Applied Ethics.

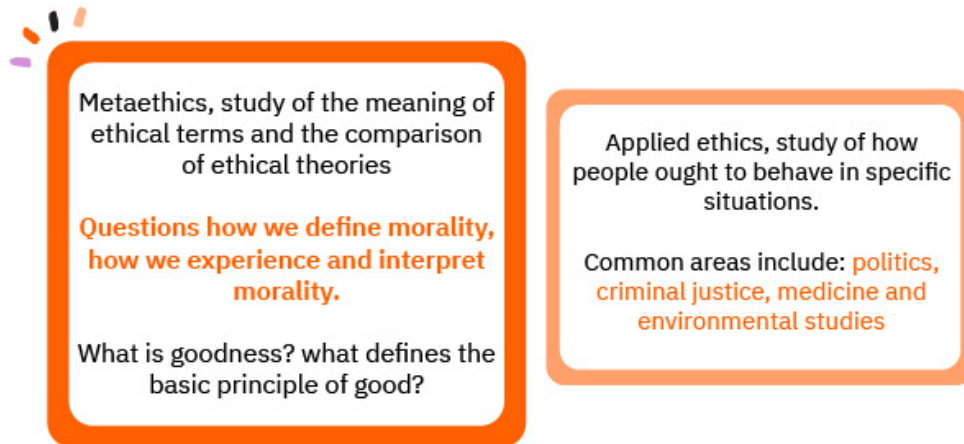
### C. The Study of Morality: Normative & Descriptive Ethics

A system of morality is based on a set of inherent rights and wrongs. There are dozens of different moral systems used around the world, so how do we sort them all out? Luckily, there are a few basic approaches to studying morality that can help us get started.

The word “ethics” comes from the Greek root word *ethos*, meaning “character” and from the Latin word *mores* which means “custom.” Ethics is a branch of philosophy that seeks to address questions about morality. These questions include how moral values should be determined (**normative ethics**), what moral values people actually abide by (**descriptive ethics**), how to use ethics in “real-life situations” (**applied ethics**), and the meaning of ethical terms, judgments, and arguments (**meta-ethics**).

Ethics is a topic that transcends gender, race, monetary status, or any other symbol to help determine the nature of people and the purpose of their actions and thought processes. Ask yourself: does ethics follow the law, religious beliefs, or societal norms? Many have come before, and many will come after asking, “Why?” For this reason, it is imperative to question, ponder, and then answer this question to understand the structure of the lives we choose to live.

There are two main approaches to studying ethics: normative ethics (ethical theory and applied ethics) and non-normative ethics (descriptive/meta-ethics)



## Normative Ethics (ethical theory and applied ethics)

The term *normative* reflects the ordinary view that some things are better than others. It is used when making judgments that involve basic values and is based on cultural norms. It is essentially the study of **HOW** people ought to act based on what is perceived as right or wrong. One asks questions such as how one should act in specific situations or scenarios, whether this person deserves to be punished or rewarded, etc.

Normative ethics has **three** branches: virtue ethics, deontological ethics, and teleological ethics.

- **Virtue ethics** places emphasis on who you are rather than what you do. Morality stems from the identity and/or character of the individual rather than being a reflection of the individual's actions. The basis of virtue ethics lies in the belief that one must begin by developing good character to live a moral life. Therefore, we ought to act in ways that exhibit virtues (such as courage or compassion), even if that means doing what might generally be seen as bad or bringing about undesirable consequences. For example, exercising the virtue of courage to be a whistleblower, even if it means losing one's job or causing others to lose their jobs, is considered both virtuous and undesirable. Another example might be someone exercising patience and restraint, even if it means losing out on an opportunity.
- **Deontological ethics** comes from the Greek words for duty (*deon*) and science (*logos*). This “science of duty” approach focuses on the rightness or wrongness of motives. It is also described as duty or obligation-based ethics because deontologists believe ethical rules bind you to your duty. God usually determines these duties or obligations; therefore, being moral is often a matter of obeying God. Divine command theory is an example of deontological theory. It refers to a cluster of related theories that state that an action is right if God decrees that it is right. The basic tenet is that God’s will is the basis of morality.
- **Teleological ethics** derives its name from the Greek word for “purpose,” *telos*. This type of ethics focuses on the consequences of an action and is often referred to as **consequentialist** moral systems. In teleological ethics, acts are justified by demonstrating that the morals behind the

act fit into some larger purpose. To make correct moral choices, we must understand what will result from our choices. If our actions result in positive and accurate consequences, we are acting morally. If our actions result in negative consequences, we are acting immorally. The action is not the primary focus; instead, maximizing good and favorable results or outcomes is the focus. **Utilitarianism** is one example of a consequentialist moral theory. At the core of utilitarianism is the **principle of utility** or the **greatest happiness principle**. An ethical decision offers the most significant net utility: the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people.

## Non-Normative Ethics (descriptive/meta-ethics)

While normative ethics are based on evaluative judgments, deeming one thing better or more desirable than another, non-normative ethics, also known as **descriptive ethics**, are based on objective judgments made from quantifiable data. Essentially, the study of **WHY** people behave the way that they do. In the factual investigation of moral systems' logic, language, and objectivity, non-normative ethics often employ empirical and experimental data from other disciplines such as sociology, psychology, or history. While normative ethics deals with personal beliefs, non-normative ethics focus on factual beliefs. "Spanking is (or is not) justified" is an example of a normative judgment. "Spanking does (or does not) modify behavior effectively," is an example of a non-normative judgment. It is a descriptive statement (also known as an **empirical judgment**) about the world that relies on experimental or empirical information.

The **two** non-normative ethics are:

- **Comparative ethics** is a type of descriptive ethics that studies people's beliefs about morality. It describes how people behave and/or what sorts of moral standards they claim to follow.
- **Meta-ethics** is also known as analytic ethics. In philosophy, meta-ethics is the branch of ethics that seeks to understand the nature of ethical properties (if there are any), ethical statements, attitudes, and judgments. Whenever a moral system is created, it is based upon certain premises about reality, human nature, values, etc. Meta-ethics questions the validity of those premises and argues that maybe we don't really know what we are talking about after all. It is distinct from normative ethics because in meta-ethics, we are not trying to figure out what we *ought* to do. Instead, we are trying to figure out what it means to say that we *ought* to do something.

## D. Theories of Moral Development

The way a person decides what is right or wrong determines their moral development, which will decide their behavior. The level of moral reasoning a person has determines the amount of time they will spend on specific moral questions.

There are several theories of moral development, including Carol Gilligan's modification of Lawrence Kohlberg's suppositions. Gilligan's theory focuses more on personal relationships and how they can shape a person's morality.

Carol Gilligan (1936-), a psychologist who studied the differences in morality between the sexes, found that men tended to define morality in more global terms, and women used more effective terms. Her body of work, and others, led to the notion of a female moral perspective. This perspective focuses on the context of relationships, emphasizes responsiveness and responsibility to others, and focuses on love, trust, and human bonding.

Moral development is the way a person decides to consider what is ethical, socially acceptable in order to drive their behavior

Right vs. wrong



It develops across lifetime and is influenced by an individual's experiences

Faced with moral issues

A person develops proper attitudes and behaviors

When questioning men and women about the need for morality, women stressed the need to protect individuals from harm and the trauma that might result from that harm. Women can empathize with others and focus on feelings associated with real-life situations. The context of women's moral decision-making is said to be one of the relatedness to harm that might befall others. They get concerned about how they might feel if the same thing happened to them. Being compassionate and caring are their key virtues. Their primary obligation is not to turn away from others in need.

## Gilligan's Stages of Moral Development

Gilligan based her theory on care-based morality, which states that people (predominantly women) move through stages where they try to find a balance between caring for themselves and others.

**Stage 1** - Pre-conventional: when a woman is focused on herself, she can better understand and cater to her needs and interests. This allows her to be more successful and fulfilled in her life.

**Stage 2** - Conventional: as women move into adulthood, they often think more about their responsibilities to others. This can involve feeling more empathy and concern for others and orienting themselves toward their feelings.

**Stage 3** - Post Conventional: women can achieve true selflessness and understanding. It's the most advanced level you can achieve as a woman and is something to be proud of. Females make decisions as they share the responsibility for taking care of themselves and their loved ones.



**Ethics of care** is also a basis for care-focused feminists’ theorizing on maternal ethics. Feminist theorists suggest that caring should be performed and that caregivers should be valued in both the public and private spheres. This proposed paradigm shift in ethics encourages an ethic of caring as the social responsibility of both men and women.

Ethics of care theories are similar to Hume’s notion of sympathy. According to **David Hume**, an Enlightenment-era Scottish philosopher, sympathy is the natural tendency of people to share feelings with others. He believed that sympathy was a natural part of human psychology to have a social nature and sympathetic identification with others.

Hume’s sympathy is the means of communication through which we come to understand the sentiments (pains and pleasures) of others and from which we can determine vice and virtue. Sympathy is seen as the tool to help bridge the gap between the self and others. Both theories find that this is limited to a person’s immediate social network, not necessarily extended to people in general.

Additionally, the **ethics of care** is a normative ethical theory developed by feminists in the second half of the twentieth century during the widespread Women’s Rights movement.

While consequentialist and deontological ethical theories emphasize universal standards and impartiality, the ethics of care is a communitarian approach that emphasizes the importance of relationships.

The basis of the theory is the recognition of the following:

1. Interdependence of all individuals in achieving their interests.
2. The belief that those particularly vulnerable to our choices and their outcomes deserve extra consideration and should be measured by the following levels:
  - a. Their level of vulnerability to one’s choices.
  - b. Their level of affectedness by one’s choices and no one else’s.

The necessity of attending to the contextual details of the situation is to protect and promote the specific interests of those involved.

While some feminists have criticized care-based ethics for reinforcing traditional female stereotypes, others have embraced part of this paradigm under the theoretical concept of care- focused feminism.

**Carol Gilligan's theory of moral development** outlines **how a woman's morality is heavily influenced** by caring about personal relationships



She **challenged Kohlberg's justice-based morality** theory stating it does not accurately address **gender differences** and the **caring perspective of women**

Her theory, **Ethics of Care** is based on **care-based morality** which states that people (mostly women) move through stages where they try to find a balance between caring for themselves and others

## E. The Relationship between Morality and Religion

Many people believe that morality is evidence of the existence of supernatural intervention in human development. Every major religion has historical texts that hold that they were inspired by a divine being who also shapes our morals. For example, in Islam, you need to follow the Five Pillars; in Buddhism, you should follow the Eightfold Path; and in Christian belief, one would follow the Ten Commandments. Unfortunately, even though each religion has one or more deities endorsing its tenets, none seem to be able to prove a definitive afterlife. Some people think that the only way that humans can become moral is through divine intervention. The evidence for the existence of a god is not completely conclusive. Different religions have different interpretations of their texts, and many people see morality as important to their lives despite the absence of a divine being.

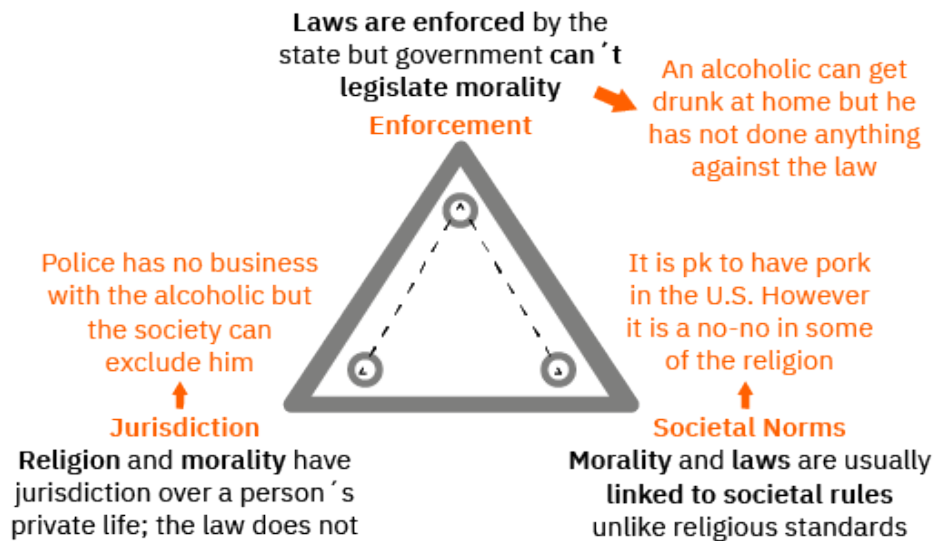
It is often said that morality and religion are interlinked or interchangeable. However, when we take a closer look, we can see that they are distinct concepts. Morality is concerned with the conduct of human behavior and the affairs and relations between people. Religion, on the other hand, looks at the relationship between humans and the Divine.

While morality and religion are distinct concepts, they are often intertwined in people's lives. For many, religious teachings provide a moral framework for living. For others, moral values may be derived from personal beliefs or philosophies, independent of religion.

### How Morality Differs from Law and Religion

- Morality - defined by values, right or wrong, good or bad behavior.
- Law - laws or rules of a country or community that are enforced.
- Religion - a religion is a set of beliefs about the supernatural or sacred, partly based on faith.
- Jurisdiction - official power to make decisions and judgments.

There are several key differences between morality, law, and religion in a Western system of governance. Perhaps most notably, laws are enforced by the state, while morality and religion are not. For instance, many religions believe that drunkenness is a sin, but there are no legal repercussions for engaging in this behavior in the US. However, an alcoholic in their own home drinking enough to render themselves unconscious is beyond police interference.



Although some may deem his actions immoral, the popular saying goes that "government can't legislate morality." The law cannot prosecute individuals until they pose a threat to public safety. Unless they destroy someone else's property, hurt someone, or get behind the wheel of a car, they are free from prosecution. In Western systems of governance, law and morality are distinct entities. Religion, on the other hand, is a system of moral beliefs that often overlaps with the law.

In North America and Europe in particular, religion is primarily associated with the state's religious institutions like churches and temples. Additionally, religious beliefs often inform an individual's sense of morality, but not always. For example, many atheists believe in moral absolutes such as not harming others, even though they do not subscribe to any religious belief system.

Some people's views are based on religious convictions, while others may be linked to societal rules. For example, in the United States, it is considered normal for some people to eat bacon for breakfast. For Orthodox Jews and Muslims, eating pork is forbidden as it goes against their faith. Similarly, Western law and morality do not view most make-up and clothing choices as problematic for women. The Amish, on the other hand, have a very conservative faith and would consider less traditional attire scandalous. Their religious standards often exist outside mainstream societal norms.

The final difference between religion and morality is jurisdiction or the official power to make decisions and judgments. While religion may have jurisdiction over a person's private life, morality is often seen as falling under the jurisdiction of the law. To keep things as straightforward as possible, sociologists contend that religion and morality have dominion over a person's private life; the law does not.

## F. Values, Morals, and Ethics

### What is Ethics?

Ethics are a set of moral principles that dictate what is right or wrong behavior. These principles motivate people to choose the right course of action in various situations.

The word "ethics" comes from the Greek word *ethos*, which means "character" and from the Latin word *mores* which means "custom." The concept of ethics reflects the evolution of morals into a socially and professionally accepted category. Ethics are the principles that guide our behavior in our relationships with others.

The study of ethics has a long history, from the era of Ancient Greece and Aristotle to modern law makers. Scholars and policy-makers both have critiqued what is right and wrong in this domain.

### Types of Ethics

The study of ethics has evolved to encompass concepts beyond the academic or philosophical realm. Ethics is now viewed as pragmatic, morally defined expectations or behaviors of people in various professions and walks of life. As a result, there are various types of ethical codes to which people subscribe. Below is a table depicting the different codes:

Types of Ethics	Applications & Examples
<b>Bioethics:</b> The philosophical, social, and legal issues arising in medicine and life sciences.	Used by doctors, scientists, and pharmacists in medical and scientific considerations.
<b>Normative Ethics:</b> Examines the principles that guide our behavior and help us determine what is right or wrong.	For example, feminist philosophers question patriarchal ideas that define the virtues of a woman.
<b>Utilitarian Ethics:</b> States that the ultimate consequence of the behavior will determine if it is right or wrong.	For example, wars and conflicts are upheld by some leaders and nations on the pretext of the forthcoming safety that it will bring
<b>Business Ethics:</b> The guidelines for business policies that are designed to promote fairness for consumers, employees, and other stakeholders.	Used by corporations, sellers-buyers, and employers
<b>Virtue Ethics:</b> Focuses more on the intentions than the goal or action itself.	Used in courts of law to come to a conclusion in a case of missing evidence or when considering exemplary past behavior

### More on Morality

As **Lawrence Kohlberg** (1927-1987) noted, the development of morality is a gradual process. Individuals typically begin with pre-conventional morality, in which they are taught and encouraged to follow certain rules and conventions. Over time, they may develop a more sophisticated understanding



of morality, known as conventional morality. Parents often discipline children to teach them the difference between right and wrong behavior, and to condition them according to an ideal standard.

At the next stage, young people and adults become familiar with the conventional standards of morality and understand what is expected of them. Some people choose to set their own individualistic and subjective moral standards, which may differ from what is considered normative.

The universality of morality is a widely accepted view, often stemming from religious or theological beliefs. This belief holds that morality is objective and not open to debate. Morality is not only personal but can also be imposed from an outside source. This is known as heteronomous morality.

There is a distinction between descriptive morality, which simply describes the morality that people personally adhere to, and prescriptive morality, which argues for the morality people *ought* to have..

## Ethics vs. Morals

Morals and ethics are two distinct concepts. **Morals** refer to an **individual's personal beliefs and values**, which may be **influenced** by factors such as **religion or culture**. **Ethics**, on the other hand, refers to a **set of codes or principles that govern behavior** in a **particular area**, such as business or medicine. In the modern age, there are numerous ethical codes that individuals must adhere to in their professional lives.

While ethics and morals focus on the "**right**" behavior, ethics is primarily concerned with **how** an individual's **behavior affects others in society**. Morals, on the other hand, focus on how an individual's behavior makes them feel.

In some cases, a person can be morally upright but not necessarily ethical. For example, a doctor might operate on a person in pain during an emergency without requiring them to clear their past due bills. It might not be ethical according to hospital guidelines or professional standards, but many doctors feel that it would be morally right to uphold their Hippocratic Oath to treat a patient in need..

Ethics are an agreed-upon code of conduct that people adhere to, while morality is relative and does not have a set code that everyone agrees to.

## Ethics and Morals Examples

All professions are guided by ethical standards. For example, a historian's professional ethic system expects them to provide honest information or findings in their work. To ensure their work is factual and based on strong evidence, historians are expected to quote or cite their sources.

If a historian comes across conflicting information or evidence, they may choose to include it in their work to offer a more comprehensive and accurate picture to their readers. They may also choose to omit this information to sound like they have the final say. This decision to go either way depends on their

morals, as ethically, a historian is not required to include all the information they come across.

## Types of Values

The worth one attaches to their deed is directly related to the values and concepts one holds which are shaped by their personal understanding and experiences. The values that someone holds close to them become a fundamental part of who they are- whether those values are based on material things or not.

For example, some people may prioritize work over other aspects of their life, such as sleep, food, or personal relationships (**Core Values**). Whereas, aesthetics and visual pleasure are important to people on an intangible and personally subjective level (**Personal Values**).

**Core values** act as the foundation for an individual or organization. They are not externally imposed, but rather arise from a person's social conditioning. This value may not hold true for future generations or for those who are not a part of this grouping, due to generational differences or exposure to other ideas outside of the social structure.

**Personal values** play an important role in guiding people's life goals, actions, and decisions. They provide a sense of direction and purpose, and help people make choices that are consistent with their beliefs and aspirations. A student who is honest and has integrity will never cheat on an exam, even if the teacher is not around. People develop these values through their experiences and by observing the actions of others.

## Examples of Values

Value is essentially equivalent to worth. For example, some people take pleasure in residing in a luxurious house and believe this will contribute to, or be responsible for, contentment in their lives, ascribing the value of fulfillment to its high monetary worth. The aesthetic value of this house might also be what makes it attractive to potential investors. In the consideration of purchasing a house from a seller, personal values, such as honesty and integrity, are different yet equally important factors that contribute to the overall value of the property. If the seller is known as unscrupulous, the value of the house may diminish in the eyes of buyers.

Likewise, if you find a wallet full of money on the street, according to our society, morally and ethically you should not claim it as your own. You should either return it to the rightful owner or turn it over to the police. In contrast, another person might see it as an opportunity to make some quick money with little effort. Between the two persons, you are more likely to trust the one returning the wallet, ascribing more value and worth to them and their sense of honesty and integrity than the dishonest ambition of the other. But to both the unscrupulous seller and wallet thief, they may place moral and ethical value in taking advantage of opportunities rather than being honest and losing out on favorable circumstances. These examples demonstrate how values are subjective and shaped out of personal experiences and ideas.

## Morals, Values, & Ethics

Ethical Principles	Applications & Examples
<p><b>Morals:</b> the prevailing standards of behavior that enable people to live cooperatively in groups.</p>	<p>Most people tend to act morally and follow societal guidelines. Morality often requires that people sacrifice their own short-term interests for the benefit of society. People or entities that are indifferent to right and wrong are considered amoral, while those who do evil acts are considered immoral.</p>
<p><b>Values:</b> individual beliefs that motivate people to act one way or another.</p>	<p>They serve as a guide for human behavior. Generally, people are predisposed to adopt the values that they are raised with. People also tend to believe that those values are “right” because they are the values of their particular culture.</p>
<p><b>Ethics:</b> rules or guidelines that establish what conduct is right and wrong for individuals and for groups.</p>	<p>For example, codes of conduct express relevant ethical standards for professionals in many fields, such as medicine, law, journalism, and accounting.</p>

## G. Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

**Lawrence Kohlberg** began his academic career as a professor of developmental psychology at Harvard University. He later became interested in the field of moral education and conducted most of his research in this area. Kohlberg's **theory of moral development** was influenced by stage theorists like Jean Piaget. According to Kohlberg, humans develop moral reasoning through a process of progressive succession. Moral reasoning is the cognitive process that occurs as an individual decides whether a potential course of action is right or wrong. Kohlberg's research into moral development involved presenting his subjects with moral dilemmas and observing their responses. He was more interested in the moral persuasion leading to their conclusion than their actual response.

Kohlberg advanced his theory of moral development at the Harvard Center for Moral Education by suggesting that humans undergo three levels of moral reasoning, each comprised of two stages.

Level	Definition	Stages
<p><b>Level 1:</b> Preconventional Morality</p>	<p>Understanding the difference between right and wrong; being determined by rewards and punishment.</p>	<p><b>Stage 1:</b> Punishment - knowing what led to the punishment means that it was wrong. <b>Stage 2:</b> Rewards - when the right thing is done a reward is then given.</p>
<p><b>Level 2:</b> Conventional Morality</p>	<p>The view that others matter, Either avoiding the blame or attempting to seek approval.</p>	<p><b>Step 3:</b> When there are good intentions, one will conform to good behavior. <b>Step 4:</b> Being obedient to authority and understanding the importance of doing the necessary duty</p>

<p><b>Level 3:</b> Post-Conventional Morality</p>	<p>This is an abstract notion of justice. The rights of others can override obedience to laws and rules.</p>	<p><b>Stage 5:</b> Knowing the difference between right and wrong (moral and legal rights). Sometimes it is found that rules can be broken or will be.</p> <p><b>Stage 6:</b> Conscience by individuals and principles. It considers the views that may affect everyone due to a moral decision.</p>
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## Pre-Conventional Level of Moral Reasoning

The pre-conventional level of moral reasoning typically occurs during childhood up to around age 9. At this stage, children tend to comply with external directives and make decisions based on what will gain them approval or help them avoid punishment. This level is typified by two distinct stages:

### Stage 1: Obedience and Punishment Orientation

During the earliest stage of moral development, a child's understanding of right and wrong is largely influenced by consequences and rewards. Good behavior is often linked to following rules in order to avoid punishment, while bad behavior may result in a negative consequence. This stage is typically characterized by a focus on self-interest and a lack of empathy for others. Although rules are not often challenged, behavior is still largely shaped by consequences. A child in this stage will often do chores out of fear of being punished.

### Stage 2: Instrumental Purpose Orientation

During the Individualism and Exchange stage (also known as stage two), children become more aware of the benefits of good behavior. Although they still seek to avoid punishment, they begin to see the value in following rules and expectations. This helps them develop a sense of personal responsibility and a sense of self-control. A child who is performing well in their math class is likely to be rewarded with a sleepover, for example.

## Conventional Level of Moral Reasoning

Kohlberg's second level of moral development is generally said to occur during adolescence, although it can continue into adulthood. This stage is characterized by a shift from a self-centered focus to one that takes into account the perspectives of others, such as family, friends, and community. This helps to develop a sense of interpersonal responsibility.

The conventional level of moral reasoning is based on a framework that respects social order. This level emphasizes the individual's need for responsible relationships with a focus on societal approval, rather than approval from an authoritative caregiver. The two components of level two are as follows:

### Stage 3: Good Boy, Nice Girl Orientation

Kohlberg's third stage of moral development focuses on developing good interpersonal relationships and behaving virtuously to earn the respect of others. For example, a child at this stage might share their toys with others to make friends.

## Stage 4: Law-and-Order Orientation

At stage 4 of Kohlberg's moral classification model, people focus on upholding the laws of society, shifting emphasis from internalized rules in a personal context to broader legal systems. This stage is characterized by a respect for authority figures and a recognition of the need for rules and laws to maintain order. Individuals have a responsibility to uphold law and order as good citizens. A child at this stage should not engage in or encourage activities that are considered to be 'wrong'.

## Post-Conventional Level of Moral Reasoning

Kohlberg's third and final level of moral reasoning is more abstract and not tied to personal or societal norms. Instead of basing morality on individual perspectives, standards are applied to worldwide scenarios and contexts, implementing values and principles that are universally accepted. Judgments are made based on ethical principles that include dignity, equality, and justice in order to maintain fairness. Kohlberg suggests that only a small number of people achieve this level.

## Stage 5: Social-Contract Orientation

At stage five of Kohlberg's theory of moral development, individuals take an objective stance on morality, rather than a subjective one. They begin to critically examine laws, not as absolute constructs, but as acceptable only if they are fair. As people enter this stage of their career, they begin to rely more on their personal values and conscience when assessing rules and regulations. They may start to speak up against corporate inequalities, for example, even if it risks them getting fired.

## Stage 6: Universal-Ethical-Principle Orientation

Kohlberg's sixth and final stage of moral development emphasizes truth, integrity, and conscience. This stage allows people to engage in civil disobedience when they encounter situations that conflict with their internalized moral principles. Here, they are prepared to take action to champion a cause regardless of consequences. For example, an individual will protest at a Black Lives Matter event even if they might risk being tear-gassed by the police.

Kohlberg later suggested that there is a seventh moral stage that is based on religious beliefs. Transcendental morality is not a fully developed theory of his, however, and remains somewhat speculative. Generally speaking, the line between religion and morality is often blurry and hard to define, making it difficult to apply to ethical theorizations.

## Kohlberg's Stages Criticisms

Kohlberg's theory of moral development has been critiqued on several fronts, one of the most significant being that his studies were conducted on boys between the ages of 10-16. This limits the generalizability of his findings due to age and gender bias. It is difficult to predict if male subjects outside of that age group (or girls for that matter) would respond in a similar manner. Carol Gilligan, as discussed earlier, has done extensive research on gender differences, particularly in the area of moral development of females. She is perhaps his most vocal critic.

Below are Gilligan's criticisms pertaining to Kohlberg's theory of moral development:

- Kohlberg believed that justice is the most important element of moral development, while Gilligan argued that caring, which is more commonly displayed by women, is equally important.
- Gilligan argued that Kohlberg's research implies that moral judgment leads to moral action, which may not always be the case.
- Gilligan also maintained that Kohlberg's stages of moral development are not clearly delineated, lacking empirical evidence.

**To summarize**, Kohlberg's research into moral development resulted in his theoretical construct of three levels, comprised of six stages of moral development. A seventh speculative stage is also suggested, in consideration of religion.

He believed that the process of moral development starts with trying to achieve a balance between obedience and punishment. At this stage, children behave morally based on what they believe will result in personal benefits or consequences.

Adolescents transition to a point at which their moral standards are governed by societal dictates and legal deliberations. In other words, they need to behave in socially acceptable ways and comply with the justice established by law and order.

Kohlberg believed that very few people ever reach the highest level of moral development which is based on universal human dignity, freedom, and equality. According to Kohlberg, this stage may require making significant sacrifices, but the rewards are equally great.

## H. Theories of Ethics: Rights & Natural Laws

The field of ethics revolves around the question of what is **right or wrong**, based on what people ought to do in their obligation to society or others. By understanding the difference between legal rights and natural law, as well as various ethical theories, one can develop a well-rounded perspective on this complex topic.

### Theory of Ethics

It can be hard to define ethics, but we can say that it usually involves a system of what is right or wrong based on what people should do.

This may include:

- **Our obligation to society**
- **What benefits society rather than the individual**
- **Being fair to others**

This may sound vague, but this is mostly because there is no specific definition for each standard that can be considered part of ethics, nor are there specific guidelines as to what standards even fall under the definition of ethics.

## Legal Rights vs. Natural Law

In most countries, the **legal rights** afforded to citizens are outlined in the **Constitution** and may include the right to bear arms and freedom of religion, for example. These are rights that have been codified into law and that people in a society must follow. Rights that are innate and that we believe every human should have “naturally”, however, are called **natural rights**, which fall under the concept of **Natural Law**.

**We consider natural rights to have been given to us at birth and, as such, they are universal.** They are based on principles like expression, thought, beliefs, customs and even privacy. There is a debate surrounding the source of human rights--some believe that a higher power grants these rights, while others hold that they are simply inherent to being human. **Natural law**, therefore, is primarily concerned with the **connections between the “natural” morality and legality** of actions and behaviors of people within a society.

An example of the distinction between these two types of rights would be that under natural rights one has a right to expression; however, under man-made law in the U.S., one cannot commit slander or verbally defame someone's character by making false statements that can harm a person's reputation. This automatically comes into conflict with the natural right to expression. In order to make sense of this, philosophers such as **John Locke and Immanuel Kant** developed ethical theories to help guide us towards making correct ethical and moral decisions which we'll explore later in this guide.

## Ethical Theories

In this section, several ethical theories will be explored, including Deontology, Consequentialism, Ethical Relativism, and Moral Absolutism.

**Deontology** is a theory which advocates for strict adherence to rules regardless of consequences. For example, people who believe that the death penalty should always be enforced even though some innocent people are executed might be described as having a **deontological perspective**.

The **deontologist** may seem noble in their actions, but there is a downside to this type of perspective. For example, if we meet a deontologist who believes it is their obligation to provide financial stability for their family, they may be less likely to take risks (legal or illegal) that could lead to greater rewards.

Let's say this deontologist's children are hungry and need food, and his wife tells him that if he does not rob a grocery store across the street, the children could starve. He would never rob that grocery store because he knows it is illegal, and his children might starve as a result. In another example, the deontologist is offered a promotion at work, but refuses it on the ethical grounds that they believe they do not “deserve” the promotion and it should go to a colleague who needs the money more, even if the deontologist also still has hungry children at home. Either way, a deontologist would not compromise their ethical outlook regardless of the consequences.

Another ethical school of thought is **consequentialism**. **Consequentialists** believe that actions are good or bad based on their consequences alone. In other words, the end justifies the means. A

consequentialist may believe that the price of gasoline is too high and, thus, be a proponent of war on countries that control oil which might lower oil trade costs. In other words, they may believe that the end result is what matters, especially if it achieves an overall larger good for society (such as lower gas prices across the country), even if it means killing a few thousand soldiers.

Some theorists believe that **ethical relativism** is the right thing to do. This means that what is morally right or wrong depends on the norms in one's culture. Subsequently, there is no one universal moral code by which all people live.

An example of this theory in action can be found in the U.S. with the recent issues of undocumented migrant farm workers. It has been common practice for some farmers to hire undocumented immigrants to harvest crops. This is done mostly because these workers are willing to work for very low wages and no benefits, thus increasing profits for the farmer but also providing desperate people with work opportunities they might not otherwise get. Even so, this practice affects competition amongst other farmers that hire documented workers and pay a legal and fair wage.

Your stance on low wages and immigration may dictate how you feel about undocumented workers being paid less than the legal wage. Some may see it as acceptable and fair, while others may see it as exploitative and morally wrong.

On the other hand, **moral absolutism** believes that a set of moral principles are universally true, regardless of culture or other factors. For example, if you were to meet a woman from Sweden who believes that the United States is morally wrong for not providing public healthcare for its citizens, she would still hold that belief even if she was living in the United States. Many Americans have value systems that do not prioritize public care programs like most Swedish people do, but your new Swedish friend believes that the U.S.'s lack of a public healthcare system is morally wrong, not just a matter of policy. The cultural differences between these two countries are irrelevant in this case. She is seeing the situation through the lens of **moral absolutism**.

A person's reputation is often what determines whether they are considered moral or not. **Virtue ethics** suggests that instead of a person's actions, their character should be taken into account when making a judgment. For example, people who are kind and considerate towards others are less likely to be seen as immoral when they break a social rule, compared to those who often and deliberately harm others.

The **theory of care ethics** holds that people are best understood as being in relationships with others, and that morality is primarily about taking care of others in those relationships. There is no one right or wrong way to do this – it is more about trying to empathize with others and make decisions that will take their feelings into account.

When it comes to **assisted suicide**, things can get pretty complicated pretty quickly. After all, even if you believe that killing others is wrong, you might have a different point of view if the person being killed wants to die because they are suffering. This form of ethics is unlike the others as it is more **psychological** than formulaic.



The standards upon which ethical principles are based vary, which is why society cannot rely solely on moral code. Establishing laws ensures that there is a consistent set of standards to which behavior can be compared.

**In conclusion**, ethics is based on a set of standards that dictate what is right and wrong based on what people should do. It is our responsibility to society to follow these guidelines in order to create a fair and just world. However, it is unrealistic to expect ethical principles to completely replace law.

Remember, **Natural rights** are rights that are inherent to all humans, regardless of where they are born or what society they live in. These rights include things like the freedom of expression, thought, and beliefs, as well as the right to privacy. **Legal rights**, on the other hand, are a set of rules that people in a particular society must follow.

In this chapter, we explored several ethical theories. **Deontology** is the strict adherence to rules regardless of consequences. **Consequentialism** is the belief that actions are only as good or bad as the consequence for the action. **Ethical relativism** holds that what is morally right or wrong depends on the norms of one's culture or society.

**Moral absolutism** is the belief that there are objective moral truths that are universally and necessarily true, regardless of culture or other factors. **Virtue ethics** says that a person's character, rather than their actions, are the most important factor in determining whether they are moral or not.

**Care ethics** is a reminder that people are social creatures who need care and support in their relationships. This is not a replacement for human-made law, but rather a set of guiding principles for our lives.

## I. The Moral Dilemma

An **ethical dilemma**, also known as a moral dilemma, is a situation in which an individual must make a choice between two or more conflicting options. Typically, the dilemma they face should present a conflict of morals or ethics, as every available option may be incorrect. This would create a situation in which they must choose between two wrong choices of differing degrees. For example, choosing between saving two people who are both drowning when you have the time to only save one, where one is your much-loved best friend and the other is a disliked family member. Both deserve to live, however, so how would you choose who to save?

In another example, you witness a family member stealing, the choice to ignore the theft or report it, knowing they could face significant consequences, is also a moral dilemma. How many variables would influence your decision? Is the item expensive? Is the shop a large chain store or a small, family-owned business? Is the family member poor and in need of money, or are they a known criminal? These are all possible considerations that might influence your choice.

Theoretical moral dilemmas, such as these, are essential in assisting individuals in questioning their personal morality and how their choices align with their values when faced with difficult decisions. The characteristics of a moral dilemma are:

- A person is expected to do two or more actions at the same time
- At times there is an appropriate and an inappropriate choice
- In some cases, the choice can get someone hurt
- At times, a legal issue is at stake

## Chapter 1: Quiz

### 1. How does Hume view beliefs that are formed by custom and habit?

- a. Some of these beliefs are necessary in order to live our day-to-day lives.
- b. They should be avoided entirely at all costs.
- c. They are valid and true because we know there is a cause and effect relationship.
- d. None of the answers are correct.

### 2. What is the most basic definition of morality?

- a. The values that make a society unique.
- b. The differentiation between right and wrong
- c. The universal truth.
- d. The way that different societies interact.

### 3. Which of the following is the best way to describe how the term ethics is viewed in the academic world?

- a. Ethics is a branch of philosophy dealing with morality.
- b. Ethics is a field of study that focuses on faith and religion.
- c. Ethics is what we do when we know others are watching.
- d. Ethics is code of conduct for a particular profession and not related to personal life.

### 4. What is the effect of virtue ethics on decision-making?

- a. Virtue ethics is only retrospective and does not affect decision-making in the moment.
- b. Virtue ethics leads individuals to make decisions based on how they think their community will perceive them.
- c. Virtue ethics states that decisions are not important as long as an individual feels they have cultivated certain virtues.
- d. Virtue ethics leads individuals to make decisions based on the qualities they believe will be formed in them as a result.

### 5. What sort of balance did Gilligan believe an individual was working toward while transitioning through the stages of moral development?

- a. A balance between a caring perspective and lack of empathy.
- b. A balance between neutrality and gender difference.
- c. A balance between caring for one's self and others.
- d. A balance between the influence of mother and father.

### 6. A psychologist who studied the differences in morality between the sexes, found that men tended to define morality in more global terms, and women used more effective terms.

- a. Sigmund Freud
- b. Carl Rogers
- c. William Sheldon
- d. Carol Gilligan

**7. Which of the following statements best describes postconventional morality?**

- a. Postconventional morality is the stage where the concept of respect begins to impact decision making.
- b. Postconventional morality describes moral decision making that may appear deviant, but once all the outcomes are known, the decision is seen as moral.
- c. None of these statements describe preconventional morality.
- d. Postconventional morality is the highest level of morality and exists when an individual makes decisions based on their commitment to their own code of ethics.

**8. What is defined as beliefs pertaining to the differences between right and wrong or good and bad behavior?**

- a. dogma
- b. religion
- c. morality
- d. laws

**9. Adherence to which of these is regulated by the Western state?**

- a. morality
- b. laws
- c. religion
- d. dogma

**10. Natural law theory recognizes a connection between the law and what?**

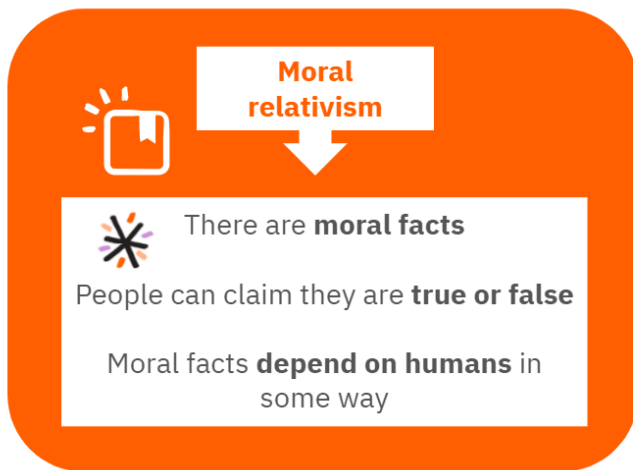
- a. Morality
- b. War
- c. Political freedom
- d. Medicine

# Chapter 2: Ethical Relativism, Moral Belief Systems and Meta-ethics

## A. Ethical Relativism

**Moral relativism** refers to many different ideas concerning diversity of moral judgment across time, societies, and individuals. **Relativism** is the theory that the truth is different for different people. **Ethical relativism** states that what is morally right or wrong may vary fundamentally from person to person or culture to culture. It is supported by the absence of one universal morality in the modern world. Culture influences the formation of morality, and culture is a subjective phenomenon; therefore, its products can't be universal. Furthermore, the concept of **moral pluralism** suggests that there are several values which may be equally correct and fundamental, and yet in conflict with each other. Ethical relativism comes in two forms:

**Personal** or **individual relativism** states that ethical judgments and beliefs are the expression of the moral attitudes of each individual person. No one person is more correct than another as right and wrong are based on personal beliefs. Morality does not expand further than the opinion of the individual. This would be considered an ethical **subjectivist** view, because the moral values expressed are, ultimately, dependent on a human or divine will. In this view, individual conscience is the only appropriate standard for moral judgment. To an ethical subjectivist, all the power of defining an act as moral or immoral belongs to the individual.



### Example

**Moral realist** may claim that the statement "**Adolph Hitler was an evil person**" is **true**

**Moral relativist** does not think it is true because it refers to some independent feature of the universe. **It is true because it rests on the judgments of a culture.** If a culture had a different morality, people in that culture could claim that the statement "**Hitler was not an evil person**" was **true**

**Social** or **cultural relativism** states that ethical values vary from one society to another. In order to decide what is morally correct, one must consult the moral beliefs of the society to which they belong. It is based on the **dependency thesis** which states that what is moral is dependent upon human nature, the human condition, and/or specific social and cultural circumstances.

**Ethical relativism** can be discussed from two positions: descriptive and prescriptive

- **Descriptive relativism** observes that there are differences among ethical practices and standards of different cultures, without evaluation or judgment of their justification. It is based on empirical fact and observation alone.
- **Prescriptive relativism** goes further, claiming that people ought not to apply the standards of one culture to evaluate the behavior of another culture.

### The two forms of Ethical Relativism

Personal or individual relativism	Social or cultural relativism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Moral attitudes of each individual person</li> <li>● No one person is more correct than another</li> <li>● Individual conscience is the only appropriate standard for moral judgment</li> <li>● An ethical <b>subjectivist</b> view, because moral values are dependent on a will, human or divine</li> </ul> <p><i>Personal relativism is often a personal choice, as it can vary from one person to the next. Even so, there are many people who value this viewpoint and base their decisions on it.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ethical values vary from one society to another</li> <li>● Consults the moral beliefs of the society to which they belong</li> <li>● Based on the <b>dependency thesis</b></li> <li>● What is moral is dependent upon human nature or specific social and cultural circumstances</li> </ul> <p><i>Socially or culturally, the rules can vary. That is why it is necessary to consult your own society's moral system to know what is considered moral.</i></p>

## B. Support for Ethical Relativism

Support for ethical relativism usually centers around **three reasoned arguments**:

1. The **diversity of moral views** among people and cultures is well documented through history, anthropology, science, and other related disciplines. Philosophers have disagreed about the basis of morality since ancient times, and no universal agreement has ever been reached.
2. **Moral uncertainty** in ourselves and our society indicates that we do not trust our own judgment, and are constantly questioning ourselves about the right thing to do. Do we tell the truth or do we protect a loved one? Even after making a decision, we often wonder if we have made the right choice.
3. **Situational differences** between people vary to such a degree that it is difficult to believe that the same things that would be right for one person would be right for another in all instances. Some people live in dire circumstances where basic amenities such as food, water, shelter, and security are practically non-existent, while others live in comfortable circumstances where those necessities are plentiful. Some people live in oppressive societies where basic freedoms are denied, while others enjoy broad freedoms. Should the choices made by the person struggling for survival be judged by the same moral compass as the person who lives comfortably and securely?

## C. Criticisms of Relativism

Non-relativism is the opposite of relativism and consists of two major forms: **Objectivism and Absolutism**.

**Objectivism** holds that there are ethical standards that are either ordained by God or by some natural moral law of the universe. Also called **universalism**, it supposes the existence of the fundamental moral principles that are correct everywhere and suitable for all people in similar situations. These moral principles are valid rules of action that should generally be adhered to, but may be overridden by other moral principles in cases of conflict. An objective value, such as health, would be universal. However, because different people have different health needs, different moral conclusions would be made. Insulin injections, for example, are good for the diabetic, but not good for the non-diabetic. Additionally, apparent moral disagreements can be based on differing factual beliefs, which lead to differing moral conclusions. For example, people can agree on the moral value of not doing harm, but disagree on whether GMOs in food do, in fact, cause harm; these people who share the same moral values will come to different moral conclusions on whether GMOs should be used in food production. In this instance, people could disagree about what the right thing to do is, but still believe there is a right thing to do, based on a universal moral value.

**Absolutism** differs from objectivism. To an absolutist, the only valid moral principles are those that are independent of context and factual beliefs. There is no exception made for situational differences. It does not matter if a person is starving, for example; to the absolutist, stealing food is always wrong and can never be justified. Where the objectivist may see stealing food as justified because it supports a good (life), which may be a greater good than maintaining private property, the absolutist makes no distinction and sees it as wrong in all cases. According to the absolutist, the fundamental rules of morality are the same for all rational beings at all times and places. They do not depend on human nature, the human condition, or any specific social or cultural circumstances. There exists one moral principle and it must never be violated. Some who criticize non-relativistic thinking sometimes confuse objectivism with absolutism; however, rejecting absolutist thinking does not automatically put one in opposition with objectivist thinking.

Objectivism (universalism)	Absolutism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Standards ordained by God, or natural moral law</li> <li>● Suitable for people in similar situations</li> <li>● People can disagree about what the morally right thing is to do but the common belief is that there is a morally right thing to do which is based on a universal moral value</li> </ul> <p><i>Objectivism suggests that there are moral standards prescribed by God or some natural law which governs society.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No exceptions made for situational differences or factual beliefs</li> <li>● Morals &amp; Principles are independent</li> <li>● Absolutists make no distinctions</li> <li>● Fundamental rules of morality are the same for all</li> <li>● Only one Moral Principle exists</li> </ul> <p><i>To an absolutist, the only valid moral principles are those that are independent of context and factual beliefs. There is no exception made for situational differences.</i></p>

## D. Other Meta-Ethical Theories

In the 1900s, philosophers explored moral claims through **three** different theories. Intuitionism believes in the tendency to evaluate an act as right or wrong without any evidence. Emotivism suggests that our feelings of approval or disapproval are what determines if something is good or not. Finally, naturalism measures what is right by using scientifically demonstrable facts.

1. **Intuitionism** makes three claims: (1) “good” is indefinable, (2) there are objective moral truths, and (3) the basic moral truths are self-evident to a mature mind. In intuitionism, we use our own intuition to find out what is right or wrong; this makes justification of an action or thought a personal matter.
2. **Emotivism** is a non-cognitive theory where value judgments, including moral judgments, do not state facts, but are expressions of emotions or attitudes. It analyzes moral judgments as expressions of unfavorable or favorable emotion. This is an example of a subjectivist moral system.
3. **Naturalism** includes any belief that the nature of ethical thinking is exhaustively understood in terms of natural tendencies of human beings, without mysterious intuitions, operations of conscience, or divine help. The natural sciences (physical or social) are used in making ethical statements, and the findings of those sciences answer ethical questions. Additionally, it suggests that our moral knowledge can be increased through our inquiry into the natural world. Naturalism is an example of a moral realism theory.

There are many other meta-ethical theories, and each has a theory in opposition as well.

1. **Non-naturalism** stands in opposition to naturalism. It states that moral properties exist but are not derived from natural properties. The intuitionist, George Edward Moore (1873-1958), argued against naturalism with the **naturalistic fallacy**. He stated that a naturalistic fallacy is committed whenever a philosopher attempts to prove a claim about ethics by using a definition of the term “good” in terms of natural properties (such as “pleasant” or “desired”). Moore contended that “good” is indefinable and a non-natural property.
2. **Moral realism** claims that some moral statements are objectively true. **Moral anti-realism** states there are no normative truths about what one morally ought or ought not to do.
3. **Cognitivist anti-realism** is the view that all moral statements are false. **Non-cognitivist anti-realism** is the view that moral statements are neither true nor false.
4. **Nihilism**, also called **error theory**, asserts that nothing is right or wrong. While some beliefs say that right and wrong can be defined by the individual or by a culture, nihilism claims that since moral properties are not tangible and cannot be defined, then no moral claims can exist. The error theory is based on three principles: 1) nothing is right or wrong in the world, therefore 2) there are no moral judgements and thus, 3) while people try to make moral judgements, they



will always fail since moral things cannot be defined. When making moral judgements people are attempting to assert the truth which, according to nihilism, is impossible since there is no universal definition of these terms.

5. **Epistemological moral skepticism** is the more agnostic view that nothing is truly right nor wrong. This view posits that since no one can know everything, then no one can ever have the ability to assert moral knowledge or objective beliefs.

## E. Determinism and Free Will

One school of thought, known as determinism, concludes that it is not always possible to have genuine freedom of choice because the actions and decisions we make are determined by external factors beyond our control. In the deterministic view, every event, including human actions, occurs due to a previous event. The actions and behaviors we take fall under the universal laws used to govern the world. It further supports that human freedom is an illusion. Human nature, psychological and environmental forces, social dynamics, and free will are all some common theories used to support the determinist view and explain human behavior.

- **Human nature:** Humans are born with certain basic instincts that affect and determine how they behave. Whether right or wrong, the actions people take are just extensions of the natural world in action. These behaviors have already been genetically hardwired into the individual. The individual (human) contains no freedom of choice. We are born one way and cannot act in any other way.
- **Environmental influences:** The environment in which people reside shapes their actions. People are not born with any inherent characteristics. Instead, their actions are a direct product of their life experiences. People cannot be held responsible for how they behave because they did not choose their environment; rather, they were a passive agent molded by forces beyond their control.
- **Psychological forces:** People are governed by psychological forces that cause them to think, feel, and act in certain ways. These forces can be either conscious or unconscious. Humans have mental impulses that have been formed since their earliest relationships and experiences. People believe they are choosing their actions. When in reality, they are just puppets being manipulated by invisible psychological strings. Psychological motivations (often repressed) form the core structure of our personality, giving us the illusion of free will.
- **Social dynamics:** Since people are innately sociable, they are heavily influenced by the people around them. Humans feel the need to conform to the prevailing norms. They feel the need to be accepted by their peer groups and want to please those who are closest to them, in addition to obeying those in positions of authority. These and other social needs will define the individual and determine who they are as a person.
- **Free will:** People make their choices via free will. The actions made will shape the person since they are responsible for the consequences of their actions. Actions compelled by external

constraints (determinism), such as being threatened, are said to be unfree. An alternative school of thought, compatibilism, says that actions are compelled by internal factors, such as our personality, and therefore are free.

## Views of Free Will

Free will, defined as our ability to choose between different courses of action and is linked to the beliefs associated with free actions, such as responsibility, praise, guilt, persuasion, deliberation, and prohibition. These judgments serve no purpose unless different courses of action produce different results. Customarily, we can only judge the actions of others that are controlled by free will. **Without the application of the concept of free will, we cannot punish or reward the individual as a result of their actions.**

Many people are concerned about the threats to free will. The severity of these concerns is subject to debate based on the level of free will each human has. Some view free will to mean origination. **Origination** gives the individual the power to break the causal chain of events, thus allowing someone to make an action that has not been caused by any other previous events, external or internal.

There are two opposing concerns of thought when it comes to what drives human action, **determinism and compatibilism**. Earlier we learned about determinism, which suggests that only one course of an event is possible. **Determinism** contradicts the notion of “free will” which holds that a person is always presented with multiple actions to take. These two concepts are considered incompatible in the same universe owing to how they view actions and choice in totality. Formally, we refer to the view that free will is incompatible with determinism as “compatibilism” which encompasses both metaphysical and libertarianism. **Compatibilism** claims that determinism is false and thus free will is possible. On the other hand, hard determinism argues that determinism is true and thus free will is not feasible.

It also encompasses hard compatibilism, which holds not only determinism but also its negation to be incompatible with free will thus making free will impossible regardless of the level of determinism. In contrast, some compatibilists hold that free will is compatible with determinism. They even argue that determinism is needed for free will. Their argument is that choices involve us to choose one action over another. Requiring a sense of how different actions will pan out.

- **Hard determinism:** The freedom for humans to make choices is an illusion. Human actions are a result of previous events being controlled by the casual laws of the universe.
- **Compatibilism:** The freedom for people to make choices is dependent upon whether their actions are a result of internal or external forces. The actions we take are driven by either internal forces, free will, or external forces. Actions caused by external forces are operating by the casual laws of the universal.
- **Indeterminism and Libertarianism:** Previous events do not determine all human actions. Meaning people can make decisions and act on them without any influence by their thoughts, they are responsible for their actions.

- **Indeterminism:** Some actions be random which makes human freedom possible
- **Libertarian:** Human freedom exists because we can genuinely make our choices and exercise our free will.

A philosophical examination of human freedom attempts to define and explain how and why we make decisions. Are we truly free to choose a course of action or be subjected to some larger factor at play that pre-decides what we do and how we do it? If we operate under the belief that human behavior is entirely dependent on external forces, such as past psychological trauma or social dynamics, then we cannot ever truly be free to make our choices. On the other hand, personal freedom is possible if we believe we are capable of making our decisions and are responsible for the outcomes of our decisions.

Your beliefs about whether or not personal freedom exists will influence your ability to evolve and grow as a person, maintain a consistent moral outlook, be able to relate to particular traditions, and actively participate in a just and fair society.

## Determinism

Determinism is the philosophical idea that human actions are unavoidable and a direct result of every prior decision that was made. "There are many determinisms, depending on what pre-conditions are considered to be determinative of an event or action." Deterministic theories throughout the history of philosophy have launched from the varying, and sometimes similar, motives and considerations. We can test some forms of determinism through observation of the laws of physics.

In philosophy, the view of human freedom is based on the scientific model of the physical universe. Many determinists argue that there cannot be true freedom because none of the choices we make are free or actions are dependent on or caused by factors beyond our control. A determinist will view internal and external constraints as an inhibitor to humans freely choosing their actions. External constraints are those imposed by your environment and your circumstances, while internal constraints involve limitations to autonomy that we impose on ourselves. Most people believe they have some degree of personal freedom: choosing to improve yourself, to holding people morally responsible and educating them to be more enlightened, seeking to achieve spiritual transformation and enlightenment, working to create a better world, raising children to be thoughtful individuals who accept responsibility, and holding wrongdoers responsible.

## F. Why Be Moral? - Sociological, Psychological & Theological Reasoning

### Why Be Moral?

In a world without morals or ethics, your best friend would simply take your new watch instead of complimenting you. The smallest disagreements would be solved through violence. There are no law enforcement officers or judicial system in place, so people are free to do as they please without consequence.

Morality is the system that helps us understand what is right or wrong. It can guide our behavior and, in some cases, be a significant part of our social fabric.

## Sociology & Morality

It seems that most people should be moral-free. After all, if I admire your watch, it would be more satisfying for me to take it and own it than just to tell you that I like it. What motivates people to act in a moral way? What prevents people from stealing others' possessions?

One way to think about morality is through the lens of sociology, which is the study of human social behavior. Morality is only important when one is in society because it is through social interactions that we learn and establish what is right and wrong. Without society, we would not have any need for morality. We are constantly faced with moral issues when interacting with other humans and being part of society. For example, if we are hungry but want to save money to buy a new computer game, we have to weigh our options and decide what is more important to us at the moment in question.

### Every Action Has A Reaction!

What would happen if we chose to steal food from a grocery store? We could get caught and be arrested, or we could get away with it. But either way, it would have an impact on others. The grocery store clerk could lose his job if he didn't catch us stealing. The grocery store owner could lose money because we stole some of his stock.

The food companies' bottom line might be affected if the grocery store owner experiences a loss of revenue. This in turn could lead to layoffs among the food companies' employees. Therefore, our decisions carry significant weight.

**Sociologists** believe that morality is based on the effects of one's actions on others in society. Therefore, if stealing food leads to a series of events that causes people to lose money or their jobs, then the act is considered immoral because it brings suffering to others. There is a sociological morality that focuses on how society and morality interact with each other. People may choose to be moral because they understand that their actions can affect others in society, or they may be forced to be moral by the rules and expectations that society has in place to protect its members.

## Psychology & Morality

If people are moral because they are part of society, what about the people who are not moral? What makes them different? Psychology is the scientific study of the human mind and its functions, including emotions, behaviors, and thoughts. The field of psychology looks at both commonalities and individual differences in order to better understand human behavior. Psychological research on morality typically explores the reasons why people act in accordance with ethical principles. Looking back at us stealing food, what makes us feel bad about stealing food from a grocery store? Is it the potential consequences of getting caught, or is it a moral issue?

There are two ways to approach this question from a psychological perspective.

The social psychology perspective is similar to the sociological perspective in that it emphasizes the role of society in shaping individual behavior. According to this perspective, individuals conform to the rules and norms of their social group in order to reap the benefits of social membership. If we do not adhere

to the expectations of society, we may be punished through means such as losing friends or freedom. However, it is still beneficial for us to be good members of society.

From a psychological perspective, morality can also be seen in terms of the benefits of doing good and the drawbacks of doing bad. For example, if we steal from the grocery store and manage to get away with it. Self-interested behavior may avoid some negative consequences, such as losing friends or freedom, but it can still result in an unpleasant feeling of guilt.

On the other hand, what if we volunteered our time at a food bank or homeless shelter? That could help us feel good about ourselves and others, and feel more connected to society. These are benefits of behaving morally.

## Theology & Morality

Theories of morality in sociology focus on how an individual's morality is shaped by their society. Psychological theories of morality, on the other hand, focus on the individual's thoughts and feelings about what is right and wrong. But what causes those thoughts and feelings? What makes someone feel guilty about stealing, for example?

Theology is the study of religious belief. Many people's morality is based on theology. For example, guilt is often associated with religion and the feeling that you have sinned.

Theological approaches to morality focus on how religion shapes our moral behaviors. For example, let's say we want to steal food from the grocery store. However, a small voice inside us reminds us that if we do, we might not go to heaven. In this case, our religious beliefs are shaping our behavior.

Theology looks at individuals in a similar way to psychological approaches to morality. My belief system and the degree of my beliefs are individual. I might believe something different about religion than you do, and I might believe it more or less than you do. From a theological perspective, **my belief is what keeps me moral.**

**Morality** is the system that helps us determine what is right or wrong. **Sociology** looks at morality as something that is impacted by society and its customs.

**Psychology** suggests that moral behavior is a result of our thoughts and feelings. Lastly, **theology** delves into the study of religious beliefs and how they shape **morality**.

## G. What Is Moral Realism, Truth & Reasoning?

- **Moral realism** is the belief that there are objective moral values, and that humans can access these values through reason. Moral facts are similar to mathematical facts; they are features of the universe that are discovered rather than created by individuals. Moral facts can include both general rules, e.g., it is wrong to kill someone who is not a threat, and particular judgments, e.g., Tyron committed murder.

- **Moral realism** denotes that people can make claims about moral facts that are either true or false. It is a thesis about the existence of moral facts and makes no specific claim about the content of those moral facts.
- **Moral realism** is not concerned with distinguishing right from wrong; rather, it posits that moral facts exist in the world and thus has ontological implications.

**Ontology** is the study of the meaning of being, and some of the debates in ontology focus on the kinds of beings and facts there are. **Moral realism** is the view that there are moral facts in the world, and people aim to make accurate moral statements about them.

## Moral Statement

Moral statements are the judgments that people make regarding what is right and wrong, good and evil, etc. It has been argued that moral statements cannot be classified as true or false, possibly because they simply express a feeling.

Moral non-cognitivism is the belief that there are no objective moral facts and that moral statements cannot be true or false. This view would suggest that morality is subjective and based on individual opinion. Moral non-cognitivism is anti-realist by implication. This is because moral realists believe that moral statements are intended to refer to facts in the universe and can therefore be true or false.

## Moral Truth and Moral Reasoning

- Moral truths are accurate expressions of moral facts. In other words, moral facts are features of the universe, and moral truths arise when those facts are discovered and stated.
- Moral reasoning is the ability of humans to discover facts through logical analysis.

An example of this would be , killing a non-threatening person is wrong. Through moral reasoning, one could discover that killing their neighbor is also wrong if the neighbor is not a threat. The moral reasoning in this instance would make an inference from the universal (killing non-threatening people in general) to the particular (killing one's neighbor). This is not the only kind of inference possible. However, it does offer one illustration of moral reasoning.

## Moral Realism Example

Moral realism is an abstract commitment that does not make claims about what moral facts are or how well they are known. It is a view that informs how we look at, interpret, and evaluate moral claims. A moral realist would argue that a moral statement is referring to an objective feature of the universe, and should therefore be treated as true.

It is possible that the person making the statement is mistaken, but if their intent is to say something true, then their statement would count as an example of moral realism. Any number of moral statements could be used as examples of moral realism, as long as they are interpreted as expressing an objective truth.

### Some moral statements could include the following:

- Adolf Hitler was known as an evil person
- If a person is not a threat, it would be wrong to kill them.
- Hurting someone to benefit yourself is wrong.
- Always think before you act. Every action has a reaction.
- Greed is an excessive or rapacious desire for more than one needs or deserves.
- Valor is a virtue.

Both a moral realist and a moral anti-realist can make the statement "Adolph Hitler was an evil person." The moral realist, however, thinks that this claim reflects a genuine fact, while the anti-realist does not believe that this claim reflects a fact. The anti-realist may think that the claim "Adolph Hitler was an evil person" is merely an expression of the speaker's negative emotions.

### Moral Realism vs Moral Relativism

Non-cognitivism and **moral relativism** are both stances opposed to moral realism. In the **moral realism vs moral relativism debate**, the **focus is on whether moral facts are mind-independent or mind-dependent**.

**Moral relativism** is the belief that morality is not absolute, but is instead relative to the individual. This means that what is considered morally right or wrong varies from person to person, and is not based on any universal standard.

The most popular belief is that moral values are based on a culture's opinions on morality. So, for example, a moral relativist would agree with a **moral realist** that the statement "Adolph Hitler was an evil person" is true. However, the moral relativist does not think that morality is an objective truth. Rather, they believe that it is a product of a culture's beliefs and values. So, if a culture had different moral values, then the people in that culture could say that Hitler was not an evil person.

**Realism in morality holds that there are objective moral truths that exist independently of our minds.** People can make statements about these truths that are either true or false. A moral realist would claim that killing a defenseless person is just as wrong as two plus two equals four.

**Moral realism is a branch of ontology** that addresses what kinds of things exist. Moral relativism agrees with moral realism that people can make statements about moral facts that are true or false.

The **relativist** believes that moral facts are dependent on minds, such as the minds of a culture. **Moral non-cognitivism** is the belief that moral statements are neither true nor false, but rather express something subjective. For the non-cognitivist, there are no moral facts.

**Moral non-cognitivism is the belief that moral statements are neither true nor false**, but rather express something subjective. For the non-cognitivist, there are no moral facts.

Moral facts are those that people in a society deem to be right or wrong.

In other words, **moral truths are objective facts, and moral statements are subjective expressions of those facts.** A moral statement is accurate if it accurately reflects a moral truth. An example of this would be if someone were to say that "Adolph Hitler was evil." This would be an example of a moral truth, as it is an objective fact about the universe that humans are capable of expressing.

**The moral realist uses moral reasoning to arrive at moral truths.** This type of reasoning aims to discover moral facts through logical analysis.

## H. Arguments For & Against Moral Nihilism

When believing in **Moral Nihilism**, one believes that there are no absolute morals that apply to everyone. Reason being is that morals can change and be given meaning by humans.

### Moral Nihilism

Imagine a world where there is no right and wrong? Over the years it was assumed that there should always be a right and wrong as it is embedded in our DNA. What would be the true meaning of life if we could not define a moment in time as being right or wrong? Feels quite meaningless, doesn't it? **After all, as humans we want to live a positive life.**

**Moral nihilism** is the belief that there is no inherent morality in any action. This doesn't mean that morality is meaningless, but rather that it's up to each individual to determine what is right or wrong. So, try to stay positive and you'll see what I mean.

### Arguments For Moral Nihilism

In this argument it is believed that there is no **inherent morality or immorality.**

While most societies believe that killing is morally wrong and rescuing a kitten from a burning building is morally right, nihilists would argue that neither action is inherently right or wrong. They practice the belief that humans add value to something being right or wrong. Humans get to choose. This results in it being **unpredictable, subjective, and possibly changeable.**

**The nihilist argument** is based on the fact that morals are not universal, objective, or reflections of pure cosmic truth. Rather, they are constructed elements of our society, like everything else. As emotional and communal beings, we need to be able to express our feelings in order to create social groups. According to **moral nihilists**, we categorize things as right or wrong in order to express our feelings and create structures that we can use to build societies. The fragility of large social groups necessitates the existence of supportive structures like societies.

As a society, we can form opinions and beliefs, and by expressing them as morals, we give them a deep sense of importance. The only meaning morals have, is the meaning we give them. It is not universally or



inherently true that other animals are evil or immoral; they are just part of nature. **Morality is something we constructed to define our species alone.**

## Arguments Against Moral Nihilism

**Moral nihilism is only one theory of morality.** However, it is one of the only theories that assert that morals are actually meaningless. Nihilism is not universally accepted, with many theories and religious beliefs disagreeing with the idea. Many ancient philosophers had theories on morality that did not involve nihilism, and religion often includes the belief in inherent morals.

Many biologists, anthropologists, and psychologists believe that morality is something that is encoded into our DNA, and that it is something that is fundamentally a part of us, just as our need to form communities is. Even if morals exist primarily to help create strong social groups, they can still be seen as universal because they are rooted in our **genetic instincts**—in what makes us human.

When examining the arguments against moral nihilism from a philosophical perspective, it is important to consider the role that epistemology plays in ethical reasoning. **Epistemology is the branch of philosophy concerned with how we know if something is true.** In the context of ethics, **epistemology** is concerned with how we know if an action is right or wrong. There are two main schools of thought when it comes to morality. **Cognitivism** holds that when we talk about right and wrong, we are referring to objective facts. This theory suggests that morals are innate and that our language allows us to express this truth.

**Non-cognitivism** is the belief that we cannot judge something as right or wrong, and that our judgment therefore cannot be true. It is the belief that we cannot judge or express true right or wrong, but this doesn't mean that right and wrong don't exist. So, both schools of thought accept that there is a possibility of inherent morals, even if we are not aware of them.

**Nihilism is the philosophical belief that nothing is inherently moral or immoral.** According to this theory, morals are constructed by humans and are not naturally or universally true. However, while actions themselves are intrinsically meaningless, we can give them meaning to strengthen their value. Nihilists who believe in moral relativism argue that morality is based on the needs of different cultures and that it only applies to humans.

However, **moral nihilism** is contested by many branches of philosophy that argue against it by pointing to our reliance on morals. This reliance is thought to be due to morals being encoded in our DNA. Others support the existence of moral truth by arguing that even if we are unable to express true right or wrong, this does not invalidate their existence. So, it's a complex and very intellectual debate. **But just stay positive, and we'll be alright. Or this will all be meaningless.**

## Vocabulary and Definitions:

**Morality:** The distinction between right and wrong.

**Nihilism:** The philosophy of meaninglessness

**Moral nihilism:** States that there are no inherent morals in any action.

**Cognitivism:** States that when we discuss right and wrong, we are discussing them as matters of fact.

**Non-cognitivism:** The claim that we can judge something as right or wrong, but that does not make our judgment true.

## I. Moral Subjectivism

### What is Moral Subjectivism?

**Moral subjectivism** is a philosophical position that holds that morality is defined by the individual. This means that what is right or wrong cannot be determined by anything outside of the individual, such as God or nature. This can have far-reaching implications, as it means that there can be no objective morality. That is, there is no morality that is true for everyone, independent of their individual beliefs. This can be seen as a strength of moral subjectivism, as it allows for a great deal of flexibility in morality. However, it also means that there can be no agreed-upon morality, which can lead to conflict.

The definition of **morality** is often debated, as different cultures have varied opinions on what is right and wrong. Moral subjectivism is the belief that there is no universal morality, and that what is considered right or wrong varies from person to person. Different individuals may have different interpretations of moral truths. It is up to the individual to decide how to put morality into action. When discussing moral truths, I am referring to an authentic reality that is immutable and undeniable. Most philosophers believe that moral truths are expressed through **moral statements**, which state morality as a fact.

An example of this would be if I were to say that this desk is made of wood. That is a fact. In the same way, I can say that saving a puppy is good. However, that statement is only a moral truth if it is accurate. And **according to moral subjectivism, that moral statement is accurate as long as I truly believe it to be.**

Moral subjectivism holds that morality is a personal matter, and that there is no such thing as objective morality. This view has implications for society as a whole, as it suggests that morality is not a shared, universal experience. Rather, it is something that is unique to each individual. This can make it difficult to create a cohesive society, as there is no shared morality to which everyone can adhere. Just because there are no objective moral truths doesn't mean that societies don't have accepted guidelines and moral standards. A community can impose any set of morals it agrees upon, but these morals are not necessarily true. Our society's approval or disapproval of an action does not determine whether that action is good or right. There are no objective universal truths, so nothing can be considered inherently wrong. There is a general consensus that your actions were wrong, and society may express disapproval of what you did; however, that is generally as far as it goes.

## Arguments for and against Moral Subjectivism

Now, this idea is accepted by many as a legitimate perspective. I mean, you generally need a certain number of followers before your idea turns into an '-ism,' right? Moral subjectivism has its proponents, who argue that the theory acknowledges what others do not - that humans are emotional beings who base our morals on emotions. Moral subjectivism is the belief that morality is based on individual emotions and experiences. This perspective points out that when people are arguing for moral truths, they are really just arguing about their own feelings. Despite the benefits that moral subjectivism can provide in terms of understanding and accepting others' ideas, viewpoints, and cultures, there are also a number of arguments against this theory. One of the key objections to moral subjectivism is that it would lead to a situation where morality would become meaningless. Without there being any universal moral truths, individuals would be left to determine what is right and wrong based on their own personal beliefs. This could result in people acting in ways that are considered morally wrong by others, as long as they themselves believe that their actions are right.

There can be no justification for punishing someone for doing something that is morally wrong, such as murder. Similarly, it is not possible to teach that certain things are morally wrong. The belief in objective moral truths is essential to maintain a moral society. Moral objectivism is the belief that there are universal and objective moral truths. There is a recognition by many that the truths of morality can only be understood through our own subjective emotions. However, there are opponents of moral subjectivism who believe that the truth is objective. The reply by moral subjectivists is that the truth is not out there, but rather is within each of us.

Philosophers spend a lot of time searching for moral truths. Some believe that there are universal, objective truths, while others believe that morality is only defined on an individual level. Morality is subjective, and therefore its definition varies from individual to individual. Moral statements are expressions of our own feelings, and are only true if we believe them to be so. It is impossible for anyone to definitively state what is right or wrong; all they can do is express approval or disapproval based on their own individual beliefs. Many people believe that moral subjectivism is a more tolerant way of determining right and wrong, as it takes into account our emotions and personal experiences.

Moral subjectivism has been argued by some to be a justification for any action, regardless of how harmful it may be. It has also been suggested that a belief in objective moral truths is necessary for the existence of a moral society.

It seems that some people will continue searching for an answer, while others may find moral subjectivism to be a satisfactory answer.

## J. Arguments For and Against Moral Relativism

### What Is Moral Relativism?

**Moral relativism**, also known as **ethical relativism**, is a highly debated topic. Its truth would determine how different cultures and societies communicate with each other. Moral relativism is the belief that

there is no universal morality, and that what is considered morally good or bad varies from culture to culture. The main position of moral relativism is that the truth or falsity of a claim about moral rules or values depends on the culture in which it is presented.

The belief that individuals have a right to privacy is not absolute, but rather is relative to the norms and values of a given society.

This means that what is considered private in one culture may not be considered private in another. For example, in some cultures it is considered private to share intimate details about one's sex life, while in others it is considered private to share one's thoughts and feelings.

## History of Moral Relativism

Moral relativism is a theory that has only gained popularity in recent centuries, but its roots can be **traced back to ancient Greece**. In particular, the arguments of **Sextus Empiricus** and the sophist **Protagoras** illustrate a form of **moral relativism** that is consistent with modern perspectives.

The Greek philosopher **Protagoras** is famously quoted as saying "man is the measure of all things." What he meant by this is that humans are the ones who set the standard for what is right and wrong, not the gods or any other external force. This is an interesting perspective that is still debated by many people today. The main idea behind moral relativism is that all statements about moral standards are relative to the individuals who hold those standards.

The belief that morality is relative to culture gained popularity in the 20th century with the rise of modern anthropology and the observation of the different moral codes across various societies.

## Types of Moral Relativism Theories

Different cultures have different moral standards. This is a simple fact of descriptive **moral relativism**, and it is not controversial. However, some people take issue with the idea that different cultures can have different morality, believing that there is a universal morality that all cultures should adhere to. This is a more controversial stance, but both sides of the argument have valid points. In contrast to normative relativism, one should not make judgments about the values and standards of other cultures.

### Descriptive Relativism

**Descriptive relativism** is the idea that different cultures have different standards and moral rules. This view is mostly based on empirical evidence from anthropology. Different cultures have different values, and there is no objective basis for preferring one set of values over another. The values of modern Europe were not seen as objective or universal, but rather as one possible moral configuration among others.

### Meta-ethical Relativism

**Meta-ethical relativism** posits that values originate from a society, and as such, rejects the notion of objectively valid, universal values. When thinking of 'cultural relativism,' one is likely considering

meta-ethical relativism. In meta-ethical relativism, **the rightness or wrongness of an action is only true or false depending on the standards of a culture**. When determining whether a killing is right or wrong, one must consider the conventions and standards of the relevant culture. A moral realist would instead look for a universal, objective rule or standard.

## Normative Relativism

**Normative relativism** is the belief that it is morally wrong to judge the standards and values of other cultures. This belief is in contrast with moral realism, which holds that it is possible to objectively judge the morality of a culture. The rule 'do not judge the values of other cultures' is not presented as being a value embedded within a particular culture.

Instead, it is presented as a value that is pertinent to every culture. This is because the value of not judging the values of other cultures is something that is important to every culture. From a **normative relativist perspective**, it would be wrong to judge another culture by the standards of one's own.

## Arguments for Moral Relativism

There are several compelling arguments in favor of **moral relativism**. One of the most notable is the fact that cultures differ in terms of their moral codes and standards. For example, some cultures may prioritize privacy, while others may not.

This illustrates how **morality is relative to cultural norms and values**. Different cultures have different conceptions of private property. Some cultures have strong moral frameworks governing private property, while others do not theorize it at all. Such an argument relies on accurate empirical data tracking the differences among various cultures.

It is possible that tracking the differences among cultures merely implies the truth of descriptive relativism, without implying any other forms of relativism.

## Arguments Against Moral Relativism

Although there may be some initial appeal to **descriptive relativism**, there are several problems with this view if we take it to be associated with **meta-ethical relativism** or **normative relativism**. One of the main criticisms of moral relativism is that it leads to tolerance of practices that are actually harmful. Realists argue that what appears to be tolerance is actually a form of indifference that allows serious problems to go unnoticed and unchallenged. When someone argues that people should be meta-ethical relativists because it is a tolerant view, they may be unintentionally adopting an objectivist stance.

In this argument, **tolerance** is being treated as an objective value, meaning that every culture should be tolerant of others. However, the apparent universal appeal of tolerance indicates that there is an objective set of values, and tolerance is one of those values. There is also a concern that tolerance could be taken too far. If people believe that moral standards for every culture should be respected no matter what, then that could mean supporting oppressive moral standards.

A **moral realist** would say that the lack of women's rights in a given culture is a weakness of that culture, and that women's rights should be respected regardless of the culture they are in. A **moral relativist**, on

the other hand, would say that there is no universal standard for women's rights, and so each culture's view on women's rights is equally valid.

Nearly every culture has some form of condemnation for murder, and the distinctions in how 'murder' is categorized are relatively small. **Cultural relativism** is the idea that different cultures have different moral codes. Such arguments propose that, because there is no evidence to support the claim that there is no moral overlap between cultures, the idea of cultural relativism is unsupported.

**Moral relativism** has been a popular belief throughout history, with its origins beginning in ancient Greece. For example, Sextus Empiricus and the sophist, Protagoras, were both well-known advocates of moral relativism. The key appeal of moral relativism is that no two cultures have identical moral codes. It is tempting to infer from this observation that no single moral perspective is better than any other. Different cultures have different moral standards and values. This is known as **descriptive relativism**. It only argues for what kinds of things cultures value, not what people should value or condemn. **Meta-ethical relativism** is the belief that morality is defined by the norms and values of a particular culture or society. This means that what is considered right or wrong varies from one group to another, and that there is no universal morality.

In conclusion, **normative relativism posits that different cultures should be accorded respect on the basis of their unique perspectives and values**. This position stands in contrast to the view that one culture should be privileged over others. Moral realists do not necessarily celebrate their own cultures' morality as superior to all others.

## Chapter 2: Quiz

### 1. Which of these is a crucial aspect of moral relativism?

- a. No single perspective on morality is better than any other.
- b. There is a single set of morals, people just interpret them differently
- c. Western philosophy is inherently superior to Eastern philosophy
- d. Your perspective on morality is superior to everyone else's because the individual determines morality.

### 2. What is a descriptive theory?

- a. A theory that describes whether an action is moral or immoral
- b. A theory that describes an action without passing moral judgment
- c. A theory that describes the morality of a motivation
- d. A theory that describes the morality of an action based on its consequences

### 3. In philosophy, morality can be used in which set of ways?

- a. Prescriptively and personally
- b. Religiously and prescriptively
- c. Ethically and gratuitously
- d. Descriptively and prescriptively

### 4. What is the basic argument in support of moral relativism?

- a. A person is born with wisdom.
- b. No two cultures have the exact same moral code, but their morals always reflect their cultural values
- c. A person is born with opinions
- d. A person is born with no knowledge.

### 5. What is a major argument against intuitionism?

- a. Intuitionism is too perfect of a theory.
- b. Intuitionism explains how we turn objective moral truths into different moral systems
- c. Objective moral truths cannot be known by such emotional beings as humans.
- d. Intuitionism only says that objective moral truths exist, not what every moral action should be

### 6. Choose the best way to explain the problem used in naturalistic fallacies?

- a. The argument jumps from facts to value judgments.
- b. The argument jumps from morality to religiosity.
- c. The argument involves attacking another person's character.
- d. The argument jumps from talking about what is good to talking about what is bad.

### 7. Which of these is not a basic belief of intuitionism?

- a. All actions and decisions should be made intuitively, without conscious thought.
- b. Human beings are capable of knowing objective moral truth through intuition.
- c. Objective moral truths do exist.
- d. Fundamental truths cannot be defined by even simpler components.

**8. Human nature:**

- a. can be defined and proven scientifically
- b. is defined by the psychology, feelings, behavior and other characteristics that humans share in common
- c. is readily apparent when a person looks in the mirror
- d. can be understood by analyzing the behavior and feelings of any one person

**9. Compatibilism is also known as:**

- a. dualism
- b. indeterminism
- c. materialism
- d. soft determinism

**10. Which of the following concepts argues that all actions and outcomes are predetermined by an existing set of circumstances?**

- a. Free will
- b. Determinism
- c. Fatalism
- d. Causality



# Chapter 3: Theory of Natural and Moral Law

## A. Natural Law

When people talk about human rights, they mean rights that they believe that all human beings, regardless of the rules of their respective societies or governments, are entitled to enjoy. These rights are things that are essential for functioning well as a human being. According to the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, general welfare needs, including food, clothing, shelter, and security are basic human rights. We also have the phrase “crimes against humanity,” which was used to prosecute Nazi war criminals at Nuremburg. This concept assumes a moral law that supersedes any law of any government. Most people will agree that there are certain things people should not do to other people, such as murder. However, not everyone agrees about what basic human rights are.

Terms & Theories	Explanations
Natural laws	those morals that are universally, objectively true
Thomas Aquinas	a 13th-century Italian Dominican friar and an extremely influential intellectual
Theological natural law	natural laws are divinely attributed
Non-theistic natural law	a universal morality exists, but it is not derived from a spiritual power
Aristotelian view	something good is something that is completing or perfective
Platonic	some things are naturally good, like knowledge or beauty, and that a good action is something that strives towards natural good
Hobbesian	something is good if it is desired and that all humans share certain desires that demonstrate the natural moral laws, the most basic being self-preservation

The idea of human rights is rooted in the theory of **Natural Law**. Aristotle formulated the theory of Natural Law through observing order in nature. Aristotle observed that nature always followed the same path. An acorn always grew into an oak, instead of a pine or an elm. A tadpole always grew into a frog instead of a cow or a bird. The end goal or purpose of the process is to be the best oak or frog it can be. Aristotle posited “the good is that at which all things aim.” The good of the musician is to make music. The good of the shipbuilder is to build ships. The good of a human being, therefore, is perfecting the characteristics specific to being human. That which makes humans unique from seeds and animals is a **rational element**, which allows humans to know the world and the truth, and to guide choice and action. Aristotle recognized that humans could choose to do what is their good or act against it. He theorized that when humans use their rational element to perfect their capacities and abilities, they function well

and are therefore happy. Following this line of reasoning, the ultimate good of humans is happiness, prosperity, and blessedness—or eudemonia.

The Romans, in tackling the challenges of governing a multinational, multicultural, pluralistic commonwealth encompassing many nationalities, religions, ethnicities, and legal systems, needed a code of laws that would be uniformly enforced upon all of their subjects regardless of race, color, or religious creed. Of the common legal core that made up the Roman code, Cicero (106-43 B.C.E.) wrote in his *De republica*, “True law is right reason in agreement with nature; it is of universal application, unchanging and everlasting; it summons to duty by its commands, and adverts from wrongdoing by its prohibitions. . . We cannot be freed from its obligations by the Senate or People, and we need not look outside ourselves for an expounder or interpreter of it . . .” This common legal core could be found in the commonalities that existed in the codes of various peoples—a *jus gentium*.

Medieval theologian **Thomas Aquinas** (1224-1274 C.E.) combined Aristotle’s theory of Natural Law and Roman *jus gentium* with Christian theology to posit that Natural Law reflects a **divine law**, a plan for the universe, whose author is God. According to Aquinas, the order found in nature and in human nature is created by God and reflects God’s will. Therefore, moral good is found through following the innate tendencies of human nature. Moral good is defined through the rational element: treating ourselves and others as being capable of understanding and of having free choice is good. Those things that help us pursue truth (education, freedom of expression) and enable us to choose freely (self-discipline, options, reflection) are morally good. Those things that hinder pursuit of truth (deceit, lack of information) and our ability to choose (coercion, limited options) are morally bad. Furthermore, Aquinas observed that humans are social creatures that function best when they cooperate.

Two important principles of the Natural Law theory serve to tie together the nature of human beings and moral law. The **Principle of Forfeiture** serves to resolve conflicts in basic values. It states that if one threatens another, then the one imposing the harm no longer has rights. The **Principle of Double Effect** deals with doing something morally permissible for the purpose of achieving some good while knowing that it also may have a bad secondary effect. Certain conditions must be met, however, for this to be right. First, the act must be morally permissible. One cannot do what is wrong to bring about a good end. Second, the person who acts must intend to bring about the good end rather than the harmful result. Third, the good results must outweigh the bad ones. The idea that no man is an island and everyone has a role to play as they perfect their rational element was a founding principle of the Enlightenment, which led to the waning of the power of monarchs and despots and the eventual formation of the United States and other modern governments.

The works of John Locke (1632-1704 C.E.) had a great impact on the leading voices of the Enlightenment. Moving forward from Aristotle and Aquinas, John Locke proposed because of Natural Law that every human being had the natural right to life, liberty, and property. These words were echoed later in the Declaration of Independence of the United States as “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” The ideas are built into the United States Constitution and society (freedom of speech, free public education, freedom of information, etc.) and interpretations of these ideas form the basis for various political ideologies.

## Criticisms of Natural Law Theory

It is these differing interpretations that highlight the questions about the Natural Law theory. There is disagreement among philosophers regarding the essence of human nature. There are those who posit that humans are by nature deceitful, selfish, and evil. Other critics make the point that just because something exists in nature, it is not automatically good (i.e. disease, drought, flood, etc.) Additionally, the theory can be used to support widely divergent concepts at the same time. For example, it has been used to support capitalism, socialism, and libertarianism.

Furthermore, as the law is based on observation of nature, the theory of evolution, which is based on mutation and survival of the fittest, makes end goals (the good) arbitrary.

To put things simply, the concept of natural law is literally a divinely-sent code that Man has been able to comprehend; this idea was introduced by Thomas Aquinas. However, it has also been argued that Thomas Hobbes' take on the same subject may be more accurate and informative, and understanding the differences might help in better grasping this indispensable cornerstone of morality. The idea of natural law is that there are certain behaviors that are intrinsically moral, and these behaviors are found throughout the universe, regardless of cultures or geographical boundaries. Aristotle introduced us to the notion that humans have an innate sense for what is good or bad. We don't need the idea of a higher power to tell us what's wrong and right; we just naturally know. In his "Nicomachean Ethics," Aristotle says that "virtue is knowledge."

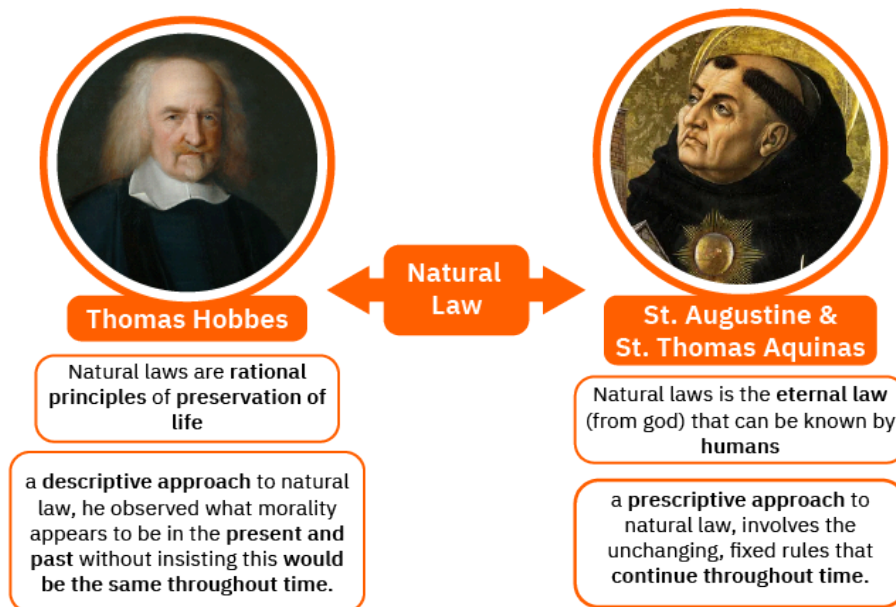
## B. Thomas Hobbes' The Descriptive Natural Law, St. Augustine and St. Aquinas

Both St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas were influenced by previous philosophical traditions that emphasized the importance of moral law. For both thinkers, moral law is a set of rules that human beings should follow in order to live in a way that is in line with the will of God.

Both of these thinkers were religious and saw a distinction between human law and divine law. You could think of human law as man-made laws and divine law as God's laws.

The laws that humans create can vary depending on where they live and what time period they are in. For example, a nation might have different laws regarding certain crimes and their punishments. These laws may be different from those in other countries. Augustine and Aquinas both agree that divine law is what God wants for human beings and what God expects from us. This law is unchanging and is the same for all human beings. These thinkers believed that God had blessed human beings with the power of reason. A person can use their intellect to learn what divine law really is. **Natural law**, according to these folks, is God's law revealed to mankind by the exercise of reason.

Hobbes saw natural law as something that was not fixed or unchanging like Augustine and Aquinas believed. Instead, he thought that it was something that could be interpreted differently by different people. Hobbes believed that morality is something that can be deduced through reason, but he also thought that it is subject to change over time. He took a descriptive approach to natural law, meaning



that he observed what morality appears to be in the present and past without insisting that it would remain the same in the future. One way to remember the term 'descriptive' is by thinking about how Hobbes was willing to describe what he saw in different time periods. In contrast to the prescriptive views of Augustine and Aquinas, who believed that morality is based on reason, the natural law approach involves fixed, unchanging rules that apply over time.

The term 'prescriptive' is derived from the belief that this moral code is inflexible and prescribed. Hobbes believed that morality is something that can be deduced through reason, but he also thought that it is subject to change over time. He took a descriptive approach to natural law, meaning that he observed what morality appears to be in the present and past without insisting that it would remain the same in the future. His work on natural law was groundbreaking at the time and has since been highly influential in the development of moral philosophy. For Hobbes, moral codes are not static and may differ due to circumstances. He believes that self-preservation is important, which explains the reasoning behind man's decision of living within the laws of a society rather than outside of it—something that could serve as a potential danger to man's society.

Let's look at self-preservation as an example and compare **Hobbes, St. Augustine** and **St. Aquinas** theories:

**Self-preservation** is a set of behaviors by means of which individuals attempt to preserve their own existence is known as self-preservation. This can manifest in a number of ways, such as through seeking food and shelter, avoiding dangerous situations, or fighting back when under attack. The physical processes that establish these behaviors are largely based on instinct and survival instinct.

A violent riot is taking place in your community, and the rule of law is virtually destroyed, and there will be no authority to enforce the law if it's violated. Your natural instinct is to keep safe, protect yourself by

all means necessary. As the rioters run through the streets, smashing windows and setting fires, it becomes clear that the rule of law has been all but destroyed. There is no authority to enforce the law if it is violated, so it falls to each individual to protect themselves by any means necessary. If you can, get to a safe place where you can lock the doors and hunker down until the violence has passed. If you must go out, be aware of your surroundings at all times and be ready to defend yourself if necessary. This is a dangerous situation and it is crucial to keep yourself as safe as possible even if that means you need to kill to protect yourself.

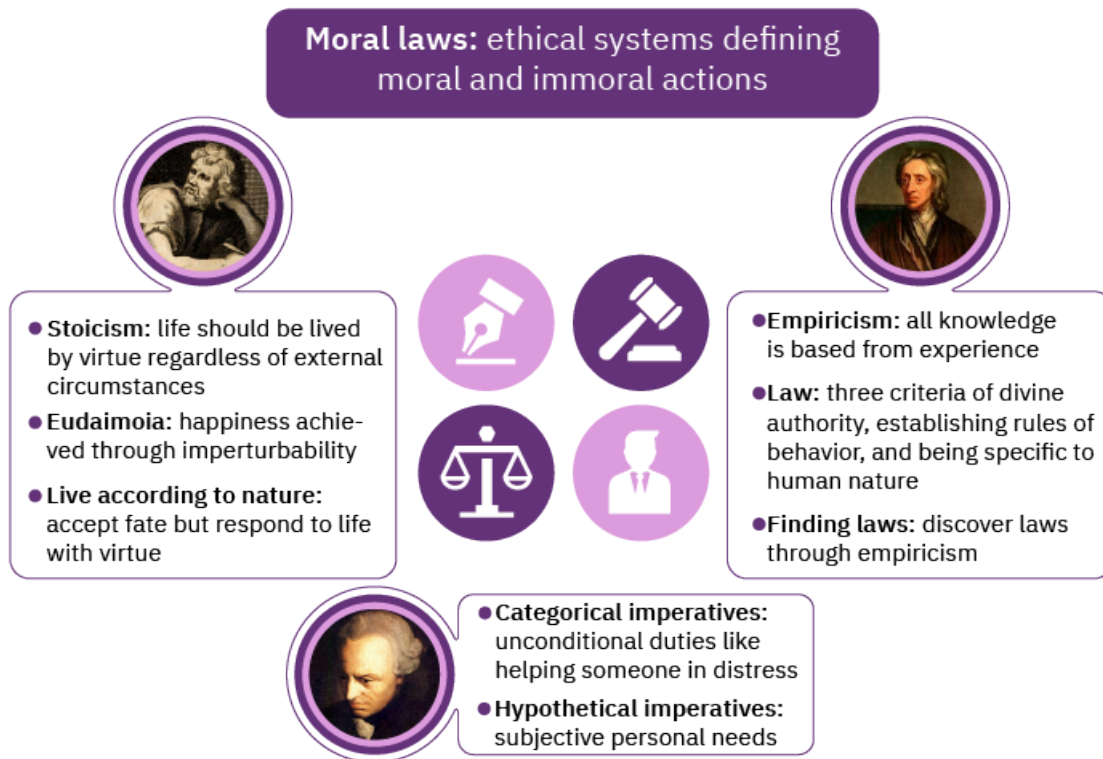
From the perspective of Augustine and Aquinas, natural law still dictates what is right and wrong in this state of unlawfulness. Obeying God's law means behaving in the same ways that you would in a lawful society because natural law is unchanging across time and situation. As all humans require food for sustenance, natural law is a set of moral rules that provide guidance and ensure stability. These rules are consistent and do not vary.

Hobbes' view is that the moral code can be contingent on the circumstances. In other words, if there is no human law in place, and you find yourself in a situation where violence is the only way to stay alive, then this is not an unreasonable thing to do. Why? According to Hobbes, it is clear that self-preservation is a fundamental goal for all humans. When there is no overriding law or authority in place, individuals are justified in taking whatever steps are necessary to ensure their own survival.

## C. Moral Law Theories

First we have to start at the beginning, we need to understand what is moral law? By now one should have a good understanding of morals and ethics, but how do we understand moral law? **Moral Law:** An ethical system that defines what is moral and what is immoral, what is right and what is wrong.

Many ethical systems exist that define what is considered moral and what is considered immoral behavior. These systems often differ based on cultural and religious beliefs, but they typically share some common ground. For example, most ethical systems would consider murder to be an immoral act, as it causes harm to another human being. Similarly, most ethical systems would consider stealing to be an immoral act, as it deprives another person of their belongings.



## Laws of Epictetus

Epictetus: Ancient Greek / Turkish philosopher. First century CE.

Epictetus was one of the most influential teachers of **stoicism**, a philosophy that advocates living life according to virtue and the laws of nature, with indifference to everything external. Epictetus' teachings have helped many people live happier and more meaningful lives, by teaching them to focus on what is within their control and to let go of things that are out of their control. According to Epictetus, a moral life is one that is rational, logical, and based in philosophy. The ultimate goal of such a life is **eudaimonia**, a Greek word typically translated as 'happiness.' Happiness can be attained through emotional stability, meaning you are not easily disturbed by external factors, freedom from strong emotions, the ability to always remain calm, and positive feelings. You can achieve this by living according to reason and logic.

How can we achieve this according to Epictetus? By **living in accordance with nature**. This involves two aspects. First, accepting that our destiny is controlled by a higher power. All things are predetermined; we simply need to accept that. Second, intelligently responding to our personal needs and duties as social beings. You cannot control what happens to you in life, but you can control how you respond to it. A virtuous person responds to difficult situations with calm and logic. This is in line with their moral code. If you obey your moral code, you will have a fulfilling life full of wisdom and inner peace, according to Epictetus.

## Laws of John Locke

John Locke: 17th-Century English philosopher.

John Locke was central to **empiricism**, the belief that all knowledge derives from experience. Locke and other **empiricists** argued that before we can understand anything, we need to determine how we gain knowledge. The first step is to understand that knowledge is a compilation of experiences interpreted through the five senses. All ideas can be reduced to simple responses to experiences, ranging from pleasure to pain. This is the conclusion that was reached.

Locke's focus on defining moral actions stems from his belief that understanding moral law is key to comprehending it. To Locke, for something to be considered a **law**, it must meet three specific criteria: it must be a universal and unbreakable rule of nature. In order for a moral law to be accurate, it must first be based on the **will of a superior**. For Locke, this meant God as the divine authority. Second, the law must establish **rules of behavior**. Third, the moral law must be **specific to human nature**.

The next step is to find the relevant laws. As an empiricist, Locke advocated that people could discover moral laws through rational and deductive science, in much the same way as they discover scientific laws. This means that morality is observable and can be tested through controlled experiments. From an understanding of how we acquire knowledge, it is possible to determine the source of an idea in experiences. Additionally, an awareness that God's laws are the basis for all morality allows us to build a system of moral laws empirically and rationally.

## Laws of Immanuel Kant

Immanuel Kant, an 18th-century German philosopher. Kant was a key figure in the development of modern philosophy. His ability to reconcile contradictory concepts into a single, consistent system earned him a reputation as one of the most influential philosophers of all time. Kant saw moral laws as absolute duties and obligations that we must follow, known as categorical imperatives.

On the other hand, we have hypothetical imperatives, which are actions we take to satisfy a desire. Let's look at an example for better understanding. I want a big juicy steak. I need to go to a restaurant and order a steak because my own personal imperative (hypothetical imperative) applies only to me since it is not a universal law. On my way to the restaurant I come across an accident and have a moral obligation to stop and help instead of continuing on to the restaurant and order a steak. The categorical imperative is always more important than the hypothetical one.

In order to decipher what is morally just, Kant proposed that individuals cannot rely on empirical observation; instead, one must use practical and logical reasoning. The basic idea is this: imagine you see someone in need of help and decide to help. You then reason whether or not everyone could act morally in the same way in this situation. If we help others solely because we hope to receive something in return, are we being moral? Is there a universal law that dictates we must help others, or is it only something we do to fulfill our own personal motivations?

According to Kant's theory, acting morally boils down to obeying the law. This is also the case for Locke and Epictetus.

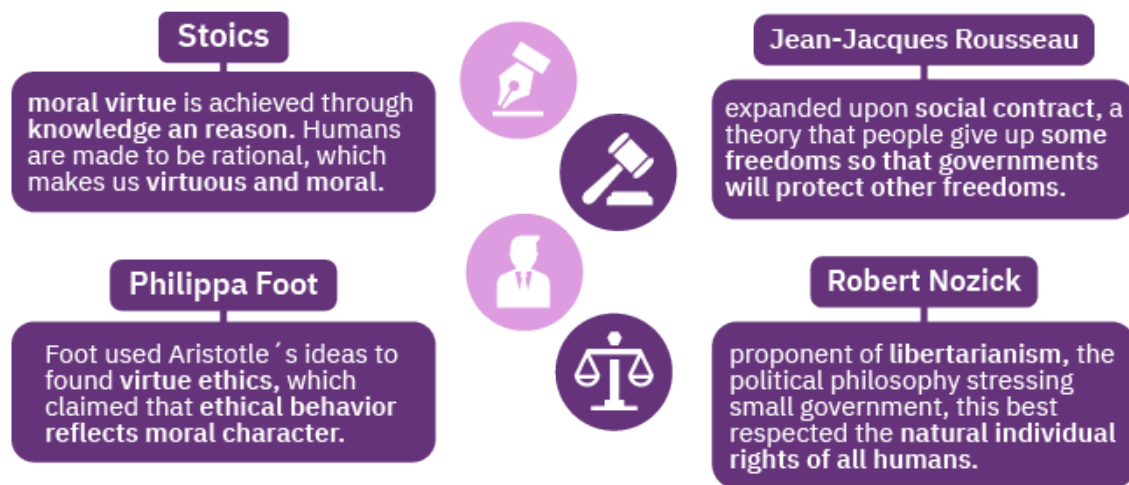
## D. Moral Law Theories of the Stoics, Foot, Rousseau & Nozick

### The Stoics

Stoicism was founded in the 3rd century BC, coming from ancient Greece and Rome. This philosophy is all about maximizing the good for life, reducing the bad and perfecting oneself to reach virtue.

The Stoic school of thought holds that moral virtue can be attained through knowledge and reason. The Stoics believe that all knowledge is derived from our experiences, and our perceptions of the world around us come through our five senses. Human beings have the capacity to translate experience into logic and reasonably gather knowledge. This makes us unique, so our fundamental purpose is to take the world around us logically.

It is essential that humans remain in control of their emotions at all times, remaining calm and rational = have a stoic attitude. Some people may be surprised to learn that the term "**Stoicism**" comes from the Greek word "stoa," which refers to a series of columns that support a temple. The first teachers of this philosophy taught in a place with many stoa, hence the name "the Stoics." However, we can also think of their moral law in this sense, too. A person needs to be rational and have strong morals to be virtuous. If a person's morals are based on logic and reason, they will be unyielding.



### Jean-Jacques Rousseau

One of the most important philosophers in Europe during the 18th century, Genevan, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's philosophy centers around the guiding principle that humans are inherently good but are corrupted by society. It is his belief that humans are innately good. Therefore, it is our responsibility to create a moral society that respects this natural goodness.

The 18th century saw a rise in the belief that governments have a responsibility to maintain moral society. This idea is most prominently displayed in the works of Rousseau, who argued that monarchs



have a divine right to rule over their subjects. This way of thinking led to an increased focus on the role of government in promoting virtue and preventing vice. According to Rousseau, people give up certain freedoms in order to have government protection of other freedoms. This is called the social contract. This means that governments have a duty to the people, and that governments are created by the people. In order for society to be less corrupt, the government needs to be moral. And that's actually what the Stoics argued; they said governments should focus on educating its citizens so as to make a logical, virtuous society

## Philippa Foot

Philippa Foot, 20th-century British philosopher

Ancient Greek philosophers influenced most modern thought. One great example is **Aristotle**, an ancient Greek philosopher who, just like the Stoics, believed in reason and logic as the basis of human moral actions. People like Philippa Foot play an important role in modernizing Aristotelian ethics of virtue.

As one of the founders of **virtue ethics**, Foot argued that ethical behavior is a reflection of one's moral character. This perspective has been instrumental in shaping the way we think about ethics today. Virtue ethicists do not believe that lying or stealing is inherently wrong; rather, they see these actions as indicative of a lack of virtue in a person's moral character.

## Robert Nozick

Robert Nozick, 20th Century, American philosopher.

Nozick was worried about governments abusing their power and interfering with people's property rights. He was not alone in his beliefs, Greek Stoics and Rousseau all believed that the state had a moral responsibility to the people.

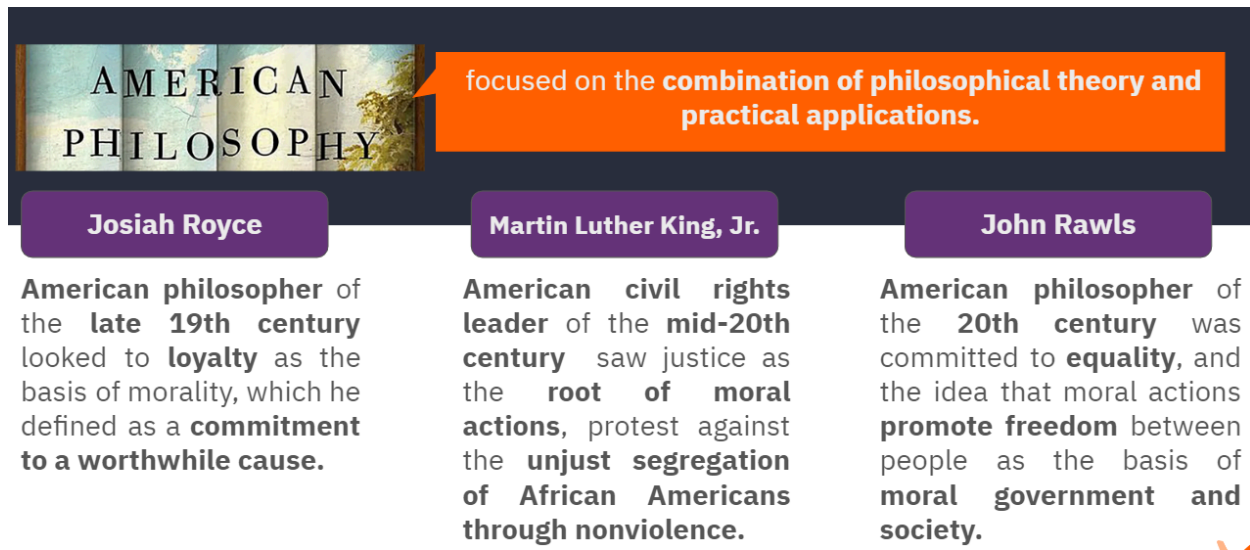
Nozick believed that self-ownership was the natural freedom of humans to own their own bodies, minds, talents, and labor.

The government needed to respect this freedom and interfere as little as possible in people's lives. In practical terms, this means embracing the ideas of **libertarianism**, a political philosophy that government should have a minimal role in people's lives. The Libertarian party (**Libertarians**) believes in a smaller government with less interference in the private lives of citizens and a stronger focus on individual freedom.

They believe in letting the free market economy take control of most things currently run by the government, giving people the most possible freedom to determine their own lives. For some people, libertarianism is nothing more than a political ideology. But for Nozick, it is a philosophical worldview that places a high value on individual rights and personal freedom.

## E. Moral Law Theories of Royce, King & Rawls - American Philosophy

American philosophers of the late 18th century gained international renown for their innovative ideas, spawning various schools of thought collectively known as American philosophy. In America, the study of philosophy is often characterized by a blend of theoretical and practical applications. This means that many traditional philosophical assumptions are regularly re-examined in relation to their everyday applications. Another defining characteristic of American schools of philosophy is that they were spearheaded by American philosophers.



### Josiah Royce

Josiah Royce, late 19th century American philosopher, had strong views on morality and what defined right and wrong actions. He subscribed to **deontology**, which is the belief that some actions are intrinsically moral or immoral. At the time, other theorists believed that actions were good if they had a good consequence. However, Royce believed that actions were simply good or bad, regardless of their outcomes. What defines a good action? It is simple, **loyalty**. To Royce, loyalty meant a commitment to a worthwhile cause. In other words, humans live in a chaotic world, but we can develop a plan for life based on a just or moral cause that we can dedicate ourselves to. This, in turn, establishes communities based around those same values.

Moral actions are those that demonstrate loyalty, commitment to a moral plan, and adherence to the underlying moral principles of one's community. Therefore, loyalty is the highest moral duty a person has. All actions should be primarily motivated by loyalty.

### Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. King was an mid-20th century American civil rights leader and activist who fought for equality and freedom across the country. Although Dr. King is not always discussed as a philosopher, he did earn a PhD in systematic theology. King's philosophy focused on ideas of **moral law**, or rules of morality that

applied to justice. For King, political justice was closely linked to moral law; a political law was just if it was also moral.

King's activism against racial segregation was based on the belief that segregation is harmful to people's emotional well-being and is therefore immoral. He believed that the laws permitting segregation were unjust and needed to be changed. Given that the laws were unjust, King was morally obligated to protest against them. However, he knew that such protests had to be non-violent in order to be effective and to uphold the Christian values he believed in. However, the non-violence movement was also linked to **justice**, which was King's main philosophical focus. He believed that violence was unjust and immoral, and therefore fighting violence with violence would only perpetuate injustice. The peaceful advocacy for justice advocated by Dr. King and his followers, even at the risk of their own lives, is more important than the risk of being attacked violently.

## John Rawls

Rawls, 20th century, American philosopher who was committed to **equality**. Known as one of the last great thinkers. Rawls believed that equality was the basis for a moral society, and that inequality was the enemy of morality. He believed that moral actions promote freedom between people, and that a focus on either loyalty or justice would promote inequality. Rawls' ideas were explored by re-examining the philosophical concept of the social contract.

This theory, which can be traced back to the early 18th century, suggests that humans are born with natural freedoms, but that they establish governments by surrendering some freedoms for protection. Humans have relinquished certain freedoms, like the freedom to kill, in exchange for protection from a moral government. The **social contract theory** posits that this government is obligated to protect the freedoms and rights of its citizens and to treat them as equals. Rawls re-evaluated this with a focus on equality.

He stated that for a government to be moral, and have therefore fulfilled its side of the social contract with the people, two things must be true. First, the people who create the social contract cannot know ahead of time which position in society they will occupy. Second, the contract must be designed so that the worst-off person in society will be no worse off than they would be in any other society.

This concept is known as the **veil of ignorance**. The basic idea is that governments cannot be created based on the hope that people will become richer and more powerful than others. A government founded on inequality is unjust. According to Rawls, in order for a government to be just, everybody must be free and equal when the social contract is made, and every privilege must be advantageous to everyone. This is known as the original position.

The election of a leader confers upon them certain privileges which may appear to undermine equality, but it does so because having a leader is beneficial to everyone - provided that leader is fair. So, if the people who created a government were not solving for power and were treated equally, then it would be moral to keep that system. Maintaining equality is therefore the most important moral duty of the government

## F. Communitarianism

Philosophers have identified two features of human nature that seem to make human beings unique: their rationality and their sociality. Human beings do not merely live in groups like some other animals. Rather, they understand themselves in light of the identities they share as members of groups and the attachments they have with the people around them. This human characteristic led to a position in moral philosophy called **communitarianism**, which holds that morality is constituted by the ideals that define and hold together human groups.

Communitarian ethics is based on the position that everything fundamental in ethics is derived from communal values, traditional practices, social goals, and cooperative virtues. Communitarians believe in the idea of a “common good.” Communitarians look at shared values, ideals, and goals of a community, rather than focus on a collective individual welfare (as in utilitarianism). They believe that even people with very different values will also have shared values. The important truth in communitarianism is that we are not separate beings, but linked to our community.

Communitarians reject the idea of timeless universal ethical truths based on reason. They believe that moral thinking has, at its core, historical traditions of communities.

Communitarianism accepts the standards of existing groups as the norm rather than inherently specifying proper moral standards on its own. This is a problematic approach as it forms morality to the pre-endorsed standards of a people, which are often considered patently immoral themselves. For this reason, many philosophers who originally endorsed communitarianism realized that communities, once deemed to align with moral standards, then seemed oppressive (for example, traditional religious communities have held sexist views in that they have endorsed the theory that women are meant to obey and serve men.)

By drawing a parallel with virtue ethics, communitarianism points to where morality should be found as opposed to what it actually consists of. It leaves us void of distinguishing moral standards against which a community can be measured.

### David Hume

Many regard David Hume as a political conservative, sometimes calling him the first conservative philosopher. This is not entirely accurate, if the term ‘conservative’ is understood in any modern sense. His thoughts contained elements that are, in modern terms, both conservative and liberal, as well as ones that were both contractarian and utilitarian. Hume’s conservatism bases moral and social order on human nature and common life rather than supernatural forces.

David Hume’s views on human action and motivation defined the cornerstone of his ethical theory. He conceived moral or ethical sentiments to be either intrinsically motivating or the providers of reasons for action. Considering that one cannot be motivated by reason alone and that passions were requisite, Hume argued that reason cannot be behind morality.

The ***is-ought problem***, (also known as ***Hume’s guillotine***) was articulated by Hume, who noted that many writers define what *ought to be*, on the foundation of statements surrounding *what is*. There seems to be a significant difference between descriptive statements (about *what is*) and prescriptive statements (about what *ought to be*). Hume is famous for his position that we cannot derive *ought* from *is*. This is the view that statements of moral obligation cannot simply be deduced from statements of fact. For many, Hume’s question is unanswerable. However, there are a few arguments that have been proposed that claim to show that an *ought* can actually be derived from an *is*. One such argument was designed by John Searle. His argument tried to show that the act of making a promise, by definition, places one under an obligation, and that any such obligation is equivalent to an *ought*.

For Hume, following the rules of the moral community is an essential aspect of morality. Hume thought that what motivates us to action is passion, not reason. Hume’s theory says that an act is good only if it is done from a virtuous motive--a motive, that is, that would be approved by an impartial observer.

Hume concludes that there are four irreducible categories of qualities that exhaustively constitute moral virtue:

1. Qualities useful to others, such as benevolence, meekness, charity, justice, fidelity, and veracity.
2. Qualities useful to oneself, such as industry, perseverance, and patience.
3. Qualities immediately agreeable to others, such as wit, eloquence, and cleanliness.
4. Qualities immediately agreeable to oneself, such as good humor, self-esteem, and pride.

For Hume, most morally significant actions are ones that fall into more than one of these categories. Hume’s position in ethics, which is based on his empiricist theory of the mind, is best known for asserting four theses:

1. Reason alone cannot be a motive to the will, but rather is the “slave of the passions.”
2. Morals are not derived from reason.
3. Morals are derived from the moral sentiments: feelings of approval and disapproval felt by spectators who contemplate a character trait or action.
4. While some virtues and vices are natural, others, such as justice, are artificial.

There is much debate about what Hume intends by each of these theses and how he argues for them. They are best understood in the context of Hume’s meta-ethical theory and his ethic of virtue and vice.

In the first thesis Hume said that reason is and ought to be a slave of the passions. By this, Hume means that reason’s role in guiding actions is limited to its utility in aiding the fulfillment of desire in responding to the passions of the self. Hume means that arguments alone do not move people; one must have an emotional pull toward actualizing the results of one’s reasoning. For Hume, the ultimate basis of morality was the act of feeling. We act on our moral positions because we are born with a psychological predisposition toward empathy with other persons because we are made uncomfortable by their suffering. Hume thought that we have a natural inclination to be moral in situations where there are moral conflicts with self-interest.

## Chapter 3: Quiz

**1. Which of the following is considered by natural law theorists to represent our purpose as humans?**

- a. To live a good life.
- b. To control nature.
- c. To exact revenge.
- d. To wage war.

**2. For Thomas Aquinas, what was a natural law?**

- a. A piece of political legislation created by a monarch
- b. An inclination which could not be disobeyed; an instinct
- c. A physical force of nature like gravity
- d. function best when they cooperate.

**3. For both St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, which of the following actions was NOT morally just**

- a. Fighting in a war because your king commanded you to
- b. Letting violence occur by refusing to act violently.
- c. Engaging in violent warfare that could prevent larger wars
- d. Authorizing war as a legitimate ruler

**4. What did John Locke believe about the knowledge of a person when they were born?**

- a. A person is born with wisdom.
- b. A person is born with reason.
- c. A person is born with opinions
- d. A person is born with no knowledge.

**5. Immanuel Kant was a/an**

- a. 18th century philosopher
- b. 15th century philosopher
- c. 12th century philosopher
- d. 20th century philosopher.

**6. Why did Stoicism adjust so well to Roman society?**

- a. Cicero transmitted many of the greatest ideas of Greek philosophy to the Romans and praised Stoicism above all.
- b. Roman virtues aligned well with the ideas of self-control and strength of character proposed by the Stoics
- c. Romans thought that Stoicism would bring more discipline to the Roman Army and strengthen their military power.
- d. Stoicism emphasized the equality of all men and Romans wanted to get rid of their hierarchical structures

**7. Which of the following statements is an argument made by Hume?**

- a. Habit influences us to believe there is a connection between one event and another.
- b. We need to believe some things we cannot prove in order to function in the world.
- c. We don't have justification for believing most of what we believe.
- d. All of the answers are correct.

**8. What is the basic belief of utilitarianism?**

- a. defines happiness as doing what is best for yourself.
- b. morality is defined by the existence of pleasure and the absence of pain.
- c. Something is moral when it produces the greatest amount of good for the greatest number of people.
- d. that morality is functional.

**9. Which of the following is the best way to sum up the focus of Rawls' principles of justice?**

- a. Punishment for the rich and reward for the poor.
- b. Equal basic rights and fair opportunities.
- c. Equal distribution of property and limitations to most individual freedoms.
- d. Greater access to resources for those who have proven their worthiness to make the most of them.

**10. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was philosophically focused on justice. According to his theories, how did this mean he had to respond to the injustice of racial segregation?**

- a. With violent protests
- b. By segregating the people who were acting unjustly
- c. Non-violent protests
- d. By overthrowing the government

# Chapter 4: The Ancient Greek Views on Ethics

## A. Schools of Ancient Philosophy

Three fundamental schools of ancient philosophy are those of the **Epicureans**, the **Cynics**, and that of the **Stoics**.

**Cynic** Philosophy focuses on improving one's own self by living a virtuous and self-sufficient life according to nature and defying convention.

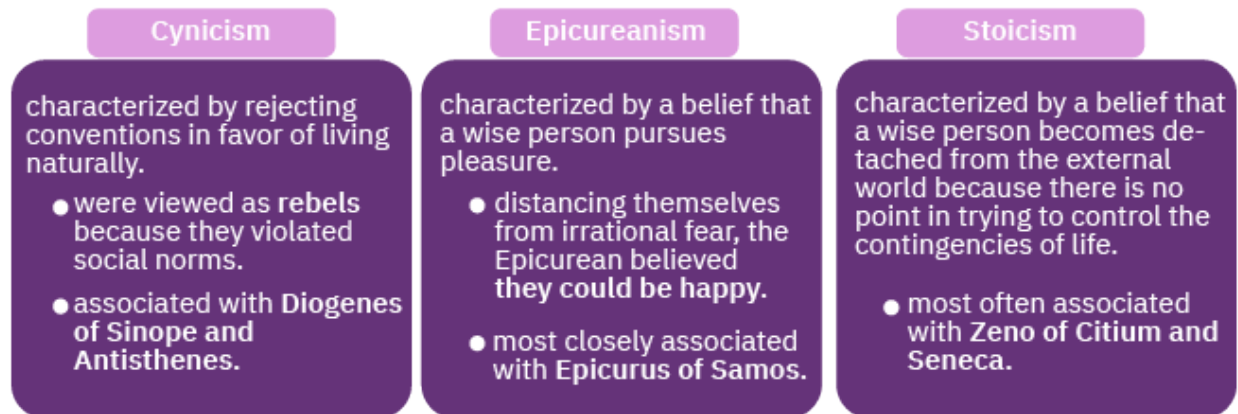
Cynics were polytheists – believing in the existence of many gods, and rejected monotheism.

**Epicurean** Philosophy's main tenant is living a simple life of pleasure yet not overindulgence.

Epicureans were polytheists – believing in the existence of many (although uninvolved) gods.

**Stoics** believed things like pleasure were neither good nor bad but opportunities to practice virtue, and that life, especially its difficulties, should be responded to with indifference.

Stoics were pantheistic – believing that the substance of the universe was god.



## Epicurean Philosophers

Epicurus is the originator of the Epicurean philosophy and where the school of thought gets its name. His beliefs could in some ways be seen as contradictory. Such as believing there was a soul, but that it was not supernatural and eternal, but that it was natural and would end at death. He believed the only reliable source of knowledge about the world was human senses, but also believed there were gods that had no involvement in human life.

While Epicurus was the founder, **Horace**, whose name is ironically not well known, left the most notable mark of Epicurean philosophy upon the world in his most famous statement, "Carpe Diem!", which when translated means "Seize the Day!", and is often seen as the encapsulation of Epicurean philosophy.



The poet **Virgil** is another prominent adherent to Epicurean philosophy. He is oddly not known so much for living a profound Epicurean life or contributions to its philosophy, but more rather for being written in as the person who was the guide through hell in Dante's Divine Comedy.

## Epicurean Philosophy

For Epicureans, pleasure is the ultimate good. However, this pleasure is not to be an immoral overindulgence, but the natural pleasure derived by living a simple life avoidant of pain and fear. For example, it would encourage one to enjoy wine, but an Epicurean would avoid overindulgence as that could lead to discomfort and other painful emotional or social results. “Moderation in all things.” is the hallmark of Epicurean living.

## Cynic Philosophers

The first individual historically identified with Cynic philosophy was **Antisthenes**, who was originally a student of Socrates.

Then there is **Diogenes the Cynic**, is historically taken as the archetype example of Cynic philosophy and who went so far in living an ascetic life as to live in giant pot originally meant for bathing turned on its side,

Lastly another Cynic philosopher of note was **Crates of Thebes** who was so inspired by Diogenes that he gave away his sizable wealth to live on the streets of Athens.

## Cynic Philosophy

The Cynic Philosophy is centered on persons being able to achieve living a right way of life through personal dedication to a style of life. This personal dedication was the openly defiant rejection of social constructs that Cynics identified as the cause to the depreciation of living a life of virtue. Such constructs to be categorically rejected were money, fame, reputation, power and social customs. What was to be done instead was to live an ascetic life of virtue and self-sufficiency that is one with the natural way. Perhaps the most identifying aspect of Cynicism was that such a life was to be lived deliberately in full view of the public, directly flaunting and defying social norms in front of the society they rejected living in congruence with.

## Stoic Philosophers

Stoicism was founded by Zeno of Citium who had actually been a student of the Cynic philosopher **Crates of Thebes**. While Zeno taught the Stoic way of life in Athens, it is believed he was by origin a Phoenician. The crater Zeno on the moon was named after him.

**Diogenes of Babylon** (not to be confused with Diogenes the Cynic) took over as head of the Stoic school in Athens after Zeno. He was one of three philosophers sent to Rome after the sack of Oropus to appeal the fine imposed on Athens.

Towards the end of the development of Stoicism came **Marcus Aurelius**. He was a Stoic who was not only an emperor of Rome, but the last good emperor at the end of a time of peace and calm for the Roman empire.

## Stoic Philosophy

The Stoic philosophy centered on the belief in universal logic, and freedom from negative emotions by following reason. Believing that things such as wealth or pleasure were neither good nor bad, but opportunities to practice virtue, Stoics strove for self-mastery by living in accordance with the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, and particularly always fulfilling what was one's duty. They believed happiness came from living in accordance with nature, which meant happiness was a matter of adjusting one's response to occurrences in life - accepting things in life one could not change, and so not being burdened by fear, resentment or sorrow.

“What is the truth?” and “How can Truth be known?” Are questions people have asked from ancient history to this very day.

Ancient philosophy was wide, varied, deep and thorough. This demonstrates the passion that ancient peoples sought after an understanding of the purpose and reason and how one should go about living their life. In the three cases presented here it has been shown that some like the Epicureans believed in enjoying life as much as is moral, while Cynics chose to resist social pleasures and instead live an ascetic life, and then Stoics lived by not striving for pleasure, nor avoiding discomfort, but logically accepting life as each person experienced it.

In each case however it can be seen the ultimate goal was one of living the “right way” through one’s own effort and dedication. Rather as an Epicurean seeking to live a life of pleasure yet resisting overindulgence, a Cynic who overtly lived a life challenging social norms, or a Stoic taking things as they are – each was a dedication of human understanding and utilization of free will to live a right life.

## B. Ancient Greek Views

### Plato (424-348 B.C.E.)

Plato uses the myth, The Ring of Gyges, to illustrate the concept of morality and egoism in his book, The Republic. To Plato, the soul has three parts: desire, spirit, and reason. Plato, following the ideas of his teacher, Socrates, considered the soul as the essence of people, and responsible for deciding how we behave. Plato considered the soul to be an eternal occupant of our being that is continually reborn in subsequent bodies after our death. The Platonic soul is made up of three parts: the logos (mind), thymos (emotion), and eros (desire). Each part has a specific defined function in a balanced and peaceful soul. Plato saw the soul as a ghostly occupant of the body.

In Plato’s *Euthyphro*, Socrates and Euthyphro discuss the meaning of piety. Euthyphro argues that piety has to do with our relationship with the gods. What is pious depends on the gods. Certain acts, beliefs, and people would be considered pious if they are loved by the gods. If the gods hated them, they would be impious. Socrates used the dialectic method to probe Euthyphro’s answers and point out

inconsistencies or fallacies in his definitions of piety. *Euthyphro* plays an important role in Plato’s virtue ethics. His ethics focus on **eudaimonia** (the highest aim in human activity) and **arete** (the path to establishing a good life).

### Aristotle (382-322 B.C.E.)

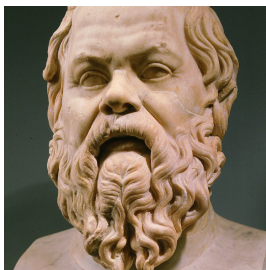


*“Those who educate children well are more to be honored than they who produce them; for these only gave them life, those the art of living well.”*

Aristotle recorded the first systematic description of virtue ethics in his famous work *The Nicomachean Ethics*. According to Aristotle, when people are better able to regulate their emotions and their reason, they acquire good habits of character. Aristotle closely observed nature; he believed nature was purposive and did nothing in vain. He also believed if morality refers to our actions, and our actions are a reflection of our beliefs, then morality ought to address what we believe. Aristotle, following Plato, defined the soul as the core or essence of a living being. Although the soul is not a tangible object, it is not separable from the body, in Aristotle’s view. By Aristotle’s account, the soul has three components: our passion, our faculties, and our states of character. He defines supreme good as an activity of the rational soul in accordance to virtue. According to Aristotle, there are two basic types of virtues: intellectual and moral. He said one should strive to become a virtuous person, and argued that each of the moral virtues was a means between two corresponding vices.

Aristotle argued that there were “three favored lives”, the best of which was the **contemplative life** (a philosopher). The philosopher spent long periods of time studying so that he could understand ultimate causes. He devoted his life to theoretical wisdom. The next best life was a **political life**. A political leader displayed practical wisdom. He devoted his time to building cities. The third life was a **life of pleasure** or gratification. Though Aristotle recognised the need for recreation, he believed that this was the life of the “vulgar”.

### Socrates (469-399 B.C.E.)



*“Strong minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events, weak minds discuss people.”*

Socrates was an ancient Greek philosopher who is widely credited for laying the foundation for western philosophy. Socrates, known as the first moral philosopher and was one of the founders of Western philosophy. By far the most important source of information about Socrates is Plato, who depicts him as a contradictory character. Plato's dialogues feature Socrates, a teacher who denies having disciples, as a man of reason who obeys a divine voice in his head, and a pious man who is executed for religious improprieties. Socrates disparages the pleasures of the senses, yet is excited by youthful beauty. He is devoted to the education of the boys of Athens, yet indifferent to his own sons; few other characters have so fascinated the western world.

The trial and execution of Socrates was the climax of his career and the central event of the dialogues of Plato. According to Plato, however, both were unnecessary. Socrates admits in court that he could have avoided his trial in the first place by abandoning philosophy, and going home to mind his own business. After his court conviction, he could have avoided the death penalty by agreeing to pay a small fine, and in prison, he could have escaped. Socrates participated in his famous martyrdom every step of the way, and his story supplies, one way or the other, the foundation for western philosophy.

Socrates: The Crito is one of four stories that tells of Socrates' trial and death and describes why he stood by his reasoning for not escaping from prison. Escaping from prison was not unheard of during the days of Athens, so Socrates' friend, Crito, came to see him with a plan on how to do so. Socrates explained to Crito why he must abide by the laws of Athens even when applied unjustly. Keep in mind that Socrates believed that harming a person meant making him less good, less virtuous, less excellent. Thus, a person is harmed by making him less just or good. Thus, as long as you retain your virtue, you are not harmed. This is why, for Socrates, it was better to suffer an injustice than to do one. By suffering an injustice, one does not show one's self to be vicious (without virtue); by doing an injustice, one does show one's self to be vicious.

Crito gave three arguments as to why Socrates should escape. They were: not escaping would harm Socrates' friends because they would be ridiculed for lacking the courage to help him escape and their reputations would suffer; not escaping would make it impossible for Socrates to provide for his children; and not escaping would make it impossible for Socrates to continue to teach philosophy, therefore his enemies would have won.

Socrates, in turn, replied in defense of himself. He accepted the principle that one ought not to harm one's friends. So long as Socrates did not lead his friends to commit an injustice, he did not harm them. One must first determine whether escape is unjust; if it is, then by allowing his friends to help him escape, Socrates would be truly harming them. Socrates' defense for Crito's second argument was that one benefits one's children by making them just and virtuous. If escaping is unjust, and Socrates escaped, then he would show himself unfit as a teacher of virtue—he would have shown that he did not know what virtue is, and so he could not make his children just or virtuous. Socrates' final argument was that if he, Socrates, wanted to teach philosophy, he must not show himself to be ignorant of virtue. Socrates believed that knowledge is virtue, to know the good is to do the good. If he acted wrongly, he would have shown that he had no knowledge to give to others.

## **Epictetus (55-135 C.E.)**

Epictetus was an educated, freed slave of Greek origin, who accomplished fame as a Stoic philosopher. Stoicism was a school of philosophy during the Roman Empire that emphasized reason as a means of understanding the natural state of things, or logos. It was a means of freeing oneself from emotional distress.

No direct known writings of Epictetus survived. The beliefs and thoughts of Epictetus were chronicled by his pupil Arrian, in the famous works, *The Discourses* and *The Enchiridion*, or *The Handbook*.

## **Thucydides (460 to 400 BCE.)**

Thucydides is known as one of the more serious Athenian philosophers and wrote the *History of the Peloponnesian War*. He was a pioneer in the field of international relations political theory, and his work set important philosophical precedents.

In order to grasp Thucydides' thoughts on politics and international relations, we must first comprehend his view on ethics, the philosophy of morality. However, when we consider morality, we usually think of philosophies that precisely delineate right and wrong. However, Thucydides had a slightly different perspective. Thucydides was always looking at how our actions ripple out and how they change, but he only looked at things that could be observed. This means that, unlike most ancient Greeks, he did not blame the gods for anything. Thucydides was focused on observable data, which makes him an early precursor of the scientific method. Instead of seeing morals as a universal, natural force, Thucydides saw them as the effect caused by a person's physical and social environment. Morality, for Thucydides, was not a question of universal truths or objective right and wrong, but rather a question of how different factors in a person's life influenced their morality. He therefore took a more skeptical view of morality, believing that what was right or wrong for one person might be different for another, depending on their individual experiences. Thucydides does not say that there are no universal truths in terms of morals, but he is more skeptical than other philosophers. Social influences and basic needs like hunger may have influenced each person's beliefs about right and wrong. This deep dive into ethics sets the tone for Thucydides' views on international relations.

## **Epicurus (341 to 270 BCE.)**

Epicurus, founder of Epicureanism. Epicurus was a Greek philosopher and utilitarian thinker. Epicurus' philosophy on making decisions was based on achieving the greatest amount of happiness. He was a hedonist, meaning he believed in pursuing pleasure, and this philosophy was reflected in his decision-making. In the letter 'Letter to Menoeucus', Epicurus takes a different approach to discussing pleasure than we might typically expect. He argues that pleasure can be defined as the lack of pain in the body and of distress in the soul. You might remember Epicurus' name by thinking of how inquisitive he was about the nature of pleasure.

## Chapter 4: Quiz

### 1. What did all three schools of philosophy (Cynics, Stoics, Epicureans) have in common?

- a. They all practiced asceticism and self-denial as a key to happiness.
- b. A belief that there is no way to control the situations and circumstances of the world.
- c. A belief that true happiness is found in a rational attitude towards life.
- d. They were all materialistic and had no fear of the unknown.

### 2. What did Stoics and Cynics have in common?

- a. They both valued strong friendships and quiet contemplation.
- b. They both turned their backs on social conventions.
- c. They both embraced asceticism and self-denial.
- d. They both believed that the key to true happiness was pleasure.

### 3. Which of these would Plato most likely agree with?

- a. The soul dies with the body.
- b. The body exists before the soul.
- c. There is no soul.
- d. The soul exists prior to the body.

### 4. What is one reason why politics are important to Aristotle?

- a. Politics influence the creation of cities that help or hinder human beings in developing the good habits of a virtuous life
- b. A political life is the best type of life to lead because the role is a practical one.
- c. Politics can be used to outlaw all pleasurable experiences, a move advocated by Aristotle
- d. Politics were not important to Aristotle at all.

### 5. Which of the following describes the type of morality Aristotle recommends?

- a. Both intellectual and practical
- b. Starting from a young age
- c. Focused on developing virtues
- d. All of the answers are correct.

### 6. According to Socrates, how is truth attained?

- a. By avoiding pain at all costs
- b. By paying teachers to pass along their wisdom
- c. Through intense questioning
- d. Through meditation and quiet contemplation

### 7. The book \_\_\_\_\_ was a condensed version of Epictetus' wisdom.

- a. Discourses
- b. Understanding and Thought
- c. Virtues and Vices
- d. Enchiridion

**8. The Thucydides Trap is named after the historical account of what war?**

- a. World War II
- b. The American Revolution
- c. World War I
- d. The Peloponnesian War

**9. What is the main enemy of happiness according to Epicurus?**

- a. Avarice
- b. Fear
- c. Selfishness
- d. Pain

**10. How did the Epicureans seek to fight fear and attain calmness of the soul?**

- a. Through detachment
- b. Through self-denial or asceticism
- c. Through pleasure
- d. Through indifference

# Chapter 5: Consequentialist vs Non-Consequentialist

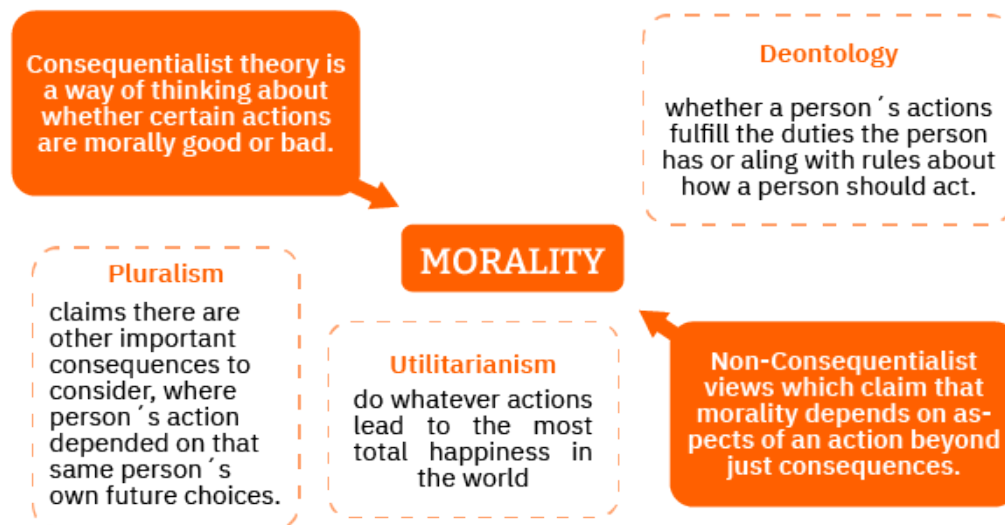
## A. Consequentialist & Non-Consequentialist Views of Morality

**Consequentialism** is the view that normative properties (**normative ethics**) depend only on consequences. This approach can be applied at different levels to different normative properties of different kinds of things. The most prominent example of this is consequentialism about the moral rightness of an act. This philosophy holds that whether an act is morally right depends only on the consequences of that act.

The paradigm case of consequentialism is utilitarianism, whose classic proponents were Jeremy Bentham (1789), John Stuart Mill (1861), and Henry Sidgwick (1907). Classic utilitarianism is consequentialist as opposed to deontological because of what it denies. It denies that moral rightness depends directly on anything other than consequences. The moral rightness of an act depends only on the consequences (as opposed to the circumstances or the intrinsic nature of the act or anything that happens before the act).

### Consequentialist Theory

According to consequentialist theory, morally good actions are those that lead to good consequences. Consequentialists may disagree about what makes a consequence good or how people should think about consequences, so the consequentialist approach can result in different philosophical positions.



(A consequentialist theory of value judges the rightness or wrongness of an action based on the consequences that action has. The most familiar example would be **utilitarianism**--` ` that action is best that produces the **greatest good for the greatest number**" (Jeremy Bentham).



## Consequentialist Ethics (Utilitarianism)

Consequentialist ethics holds that morality is based on the outcomes of our choices. Those who subscribe to this form of moral reasoning typically focus on how these consequences affect everyone, not just the individual taking the action.

**Ethical altruism** dictates that in order to act morally, people must take actions that benefit the greatest number of people possible. This claim of people having a moral duty to help others is based on the idea that we are all interconnected and that what affects one person affects us all. However, Ethical **egoism** is the belief that individuals should pursue their own self-interests.

Consequentialist Ethical Philosophers: **Epicurus, Smith, Bentham, Mill, Rand**

## Non-Consequentialist Theory (Deontology)

The non-consequentialist theory states that an action can be considered right or wrong regardless of whether it leads to good or bad consequences. This theory is based on the belief that the morality of an action should be judged based on the action itself, not on the outcome. While consequentialist ethics only focus on consequences, non-consequentialist ethics take other factors into consideration. For example, the consequentialist view generally holds that people should only weigh their own welfare as much as that of any other person. People are often faced with tough choices in life where they have to put their own welfare at risk so that others might benefit. Some people disagree and claim that people have the right to protect their own safety rather than make a huge sacrifice for others. This is called a prerogative. An example of a non-consequentialist is Immanuel Kant.

Term	Definition
Utilitarianism	The view that the moral worth of an action is determined by how much happiness or suffering it brings to the world, and therefore people should always do whatever will bring the most happiness to the most people.
Hedonism	The view that we should judge actions based on how much pleasure or pain they produce.
Pluralism	The view that actions should be judged by the consequences they bring about, such as justice, love, or knowledge.
Actual consequentialism	The view that actions are right or wrong depending on the consequences they actually bring about.
Subjective consequentialism	The view that a person's actions are right or wrong depending on what they thought the consequences would be.
Motive consequentialism	The view that a person's action should be judged by determining their motivation for doing that action and examining the consequences the motive brings about.
Actualism	The view that when a person is deciding which action would be best, they should weigh the consequences of actions based on what their actual choices will be in the future.
Possibilism	The view that when a person is deciding which action would be best, they should weigh the consequences of actions based on what the possible actions they would be capable of taking in the future.
Rule consequentialism	The view that the morality of an action depends on the consequences brought about by the principle that a person acted on when taking the action.
Act consequentialism	The view that the morality of an action depends on the consequences brought about by the action a person took.

## B. Deontological Ethics and Theories

Deontology is the science of duty. This approach focuses on the rightness or wrongness of motives. It is also described as duty or obligation based ethics, because deontologists believe that ethical rules bind you to your duty. These duties or obligations are usually determined by God; therefore, being moral is often a matter of obeying God. **Divine Command Theory** is an example of deontological theory.

### Immanuel Kant

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) paved a new way for the thought processes of ethics. He did not take the standard role many before him did; instead, he chose to question, as did Socrates, the wrongness of human acts. Humans are able to choose and judge what actions they take for rightness. When one chooses to commit a wrongful act, that person will not be looked upon favorably.

In one of Kant's writings, he described and distinguished between what is good, what is not good, and the factors that determine this. He believed good will is the only good that is without qualification in existence, while explaining how something can only be good if it is compatible with good itself. Kant helped to relate this in regards to one performing a duty out of duty, or just doing it for no other purpose. This, in turn, is what makes a good person good. In addition, it is the presence of self-governing reason in each person that Kant thought offered decisive grounds for viewing each individual as possessed of equal worth and deserving of equal respect.

Kantianism is a deontological, act-based, human valuing philosophy. Kant believed people were inherently bad and that we needed to use our reason to come up with a moral framework to transcend mortal life and ultimately gain entrance to heaven. To do this, people have to live by acts that are as selfless as possible.

Kant believed moral principles were objects of rational choice. The central idea of Kant's ethic is the emphasis on the importance of reason and the rational nature of moral principles. He believed that the meaning of morality was duty, simply for the sake of duty. Since the only thing that is unconditionally good, without qualification, is goodwill, he believed we must act from duty to have goodwill. Kant felt that morality could not be confused with self-interest, regardless of how enlightened the interest.

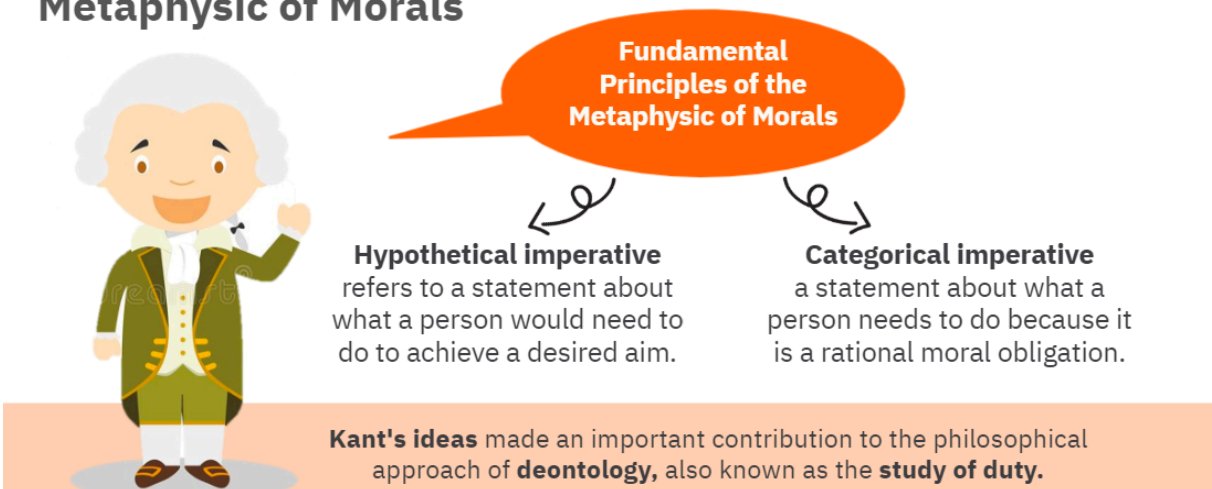
Major tenets of Kant's moral theory include:

1. **Personal autonomy:** People are capable of self-rule. People make their own choices, whereas things cannot choose for themselves. People use things. People should not use other people because it denies their personal autonomy.
2. **Value of intentions (acts)/consequences:** Value lies in intention, not in consequence. If people have the right motives, they have no liability in the outcome because they had the right intent. If their actions render a favorable consequence, they cannot accept credit for the outcome. Therefore, individuals may neither accept praise nor blame for consequences.

## C. Categorical Imperatives

One of Kant's best-known topics is the **Categorical Imperative**. An imperative is a command that tells us to exercise our wills in a particular way. There are two types of imperatives; categorical and hypothetical. **Hypothetical imperatives** are based on individual desires; for example, "if I want to pass the test, I ought to study," is not a moral imperative because it is contingent on a want, and can be avoided by changing the desires.

### Immanuel Kant's Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals



**Categorical imperatives**, however, are based on rational thought and are universal in nature. They are things everyone ought to do, no matter what the conditions. It is the categorical imperative that is a basic principle of Kantianism.

Kant uses the categorical imperative as the ultimate test of morality in any situation. He assumes that every voluntary act is based upon a maxim of one kind or another. A maxim is a moral statement or rule of universal truth that the will of an individual uses in making a decision. Kant's search for the supreme principle of morality began with the concept of a categorical imperative that generated the first formula and maxim.

### First Formulation – The Formula of Universal Law and Nature

*Maxim: We are never permitted to commit any act that we cannot as a universal/natural law.*

Moral obligations are universal; that is, they are unconditional and apply to everyone. One way to test the morality of any act would be to consider whether you are able to do it for everyone. To will something universally is similar to willing it as law, since law has a degree of universality. Kant observed that all of nature seemed to follow a universal law (e.g., birth, life, death). He saw a harmony in all living things that he felt could be duplicated by human beings. He viewed nature as a system governed by laws. Therefore he thought that we should always ask whether an action is a universal law of nature.

In the first formulation, he discusses how moral reasoning decisions are made. To understand why one makes a decision to act in a certain way, the following considerations must be made:

- A. Would said action follow universal law?
- B. Is it conceivable?
- C. If it is, then would this action then be taken?

If so, one can accept this action as morally permissible. Kant also felt that if some standard of the rational of the categorical imperative was violated, then immorality was the end result.

Freedom plays a central role in Kant's ethics. He believed reason and freedom are one and the same, yet theoretical reason and practical freedom have inherent differences. One would not be able to demonstrate freedom while the other would make that assumption, respectively. Kant states we must think of ourselves as free and take the common sense approach. The thought process one has will influence how one then acts.

Kant then considered the motive for following a categorical imperative that led to the creation of the second formula. This formula represents the *matter* of the moral law, the result of acting from a law valid for all rational beings.

## Second Formulation – The Formula of Humanity

*Maxim: Always treat people not as a means, but as an end.*

First, this formula tells us to respect ourselves and other human beings. Kant called this **respect for persons** and believed it was a principle of humanity. Kant thought that human beings occupy a special place in creation and other things only have the value that human beings give them. Because we have personal autonomy—we are rational and capable of making our own decisions and guiding our conduct by reason—humans have dignity.

Because of this, humans have the **duty of beneficence** (doing good) to all persons. We may never manipulate people in order to achieve our purposes.

Second, it tells us to acknowledge the intrinsic value in people rather than the instrumental value. Kant believed that people are precious creations of God; therefore, they may not be used as instruments for attaining one's own desires. Each individual must be treated in a way that recognizes his or her uniqueness and value.

The second categorical imperative, which is dictated by reasoning for moral action, states that one is never to use another as a means to an end. This is important to understanding Kant's moral theory, as a whole, in that humans are a means unto themselves.

## Third Formulation – The Formula of Autonomy and The Formula of the Kingdom of Ends

The third formula draws on ideas expressed in the previous formulas.

*The Formula of Autonomy Maxim: The decision to act according to a maxim is regarded as having made the maxim a universal law.*

When we make a Kantian moral decision, we act freely. An external source does not decide for us. The Formula of Autonomy makes explicit the value and dignity of humanity. It focuses on our being potential authors of laws valid for all rational beings. It is our status as potential authors of universal law that is the basis of our dignity.

*The Formula of the Kingdom of Ends Maxim: We ought to act only by maxims that would harmonize with a possible kingdom of ends.*

Kant defined a kingdom as various rational beings systematically united through common laws. Rational beings constitute a kingdom to the extent that their ends constitute a system. To constitute a system not only must their ends be mutually compatible, but they must be mutually reinforcing as well, constituting a system of shared ends. Universal adherence to the laws of a kingdom of ends would result in furthering the ends of all rational beings in a single teleological system.

These three formulas represent the same principle and differ only in representing different aspects of that same principle. Kant claimed that for appraisal of an action the first formula is best, but ideally all three should be applied.

## D. Psychological & Ethical Egoism

### Ethical Egoism

**Ethical Egoism** is **derived** from **consequential ethics theory** – that **consequences**, not reasoning, **determine ethics**. In the case of **Ethical Egoism** the **consequences** that define the ethics of any action are solely the **resulting impact on oneself**. Ethical Egoism can be easily remembered in this way, “It is ethical to be egotistical.” That is to say that it is ethical, it is morally correct, to make decisions based solely on what one perceives would be best for oneself. All moral justifications stem from results being beneficial to the individual making any decisions. This makes Ethical Egoism stand out against other forms of Egoism in that it promotes the concept that it is morally right for individuals to be self-interested. Or even more simply put – selfish.

### For Ethical Egoism Perspective

How could Ethical Egoism be morally correct? Ethical Egoism could be seen as directly related to the evolutionary concept of “**Survival of the Fittest**”. It could be seen that creatures evolved according to Ethical Egoism before any consideration of their actions could even be ethically reasoned out. That is to say that before a creature could reason as to why or why not make any decision, if it was hungry it would eat other creatures, or, at minimum take the food of other creatures with no regard as to the effects on that targeted creature. It could be reasoned that it is exactly this behavior that generated the competition necessary for the weakest among a species to fail at survival, and the strongest within a species, or even in the competition between different species against each other, to survive and reproduce and become the dominant creature on the evolutionary scale.

## Against Ethical Egoism Perspective

A well founded ethical theory that would stand as the **opposite of** Ethical Egoism would be **Utilitarianism** which states, conversely to being self-focused, that **actions** should instead **maximize happiness and well-being for all affected individuals**. This stands in direct opposition to Ethical Egoism as it is impossible to make decisions trying to assure they have the best impact on everyone the decision could affect. Utilitarianism states that it is impossible to make decisions based solely on the results to oneself, because each individual is inseparably connected to a larger society and community of others. It can be understood from a Utilitarianism standpoint, that what is best for the individual is to do what is best for the community, as that only strengthens a community.

## Psychological Egoism

**Psychological Egoism** is not a moral or ethical philosophy as much as it is a direct **statement** that **humans** due to their very nature, their inherent biological psychological makeup, when making decisions, rather consciously or subconsciously, **will always make self-serving decisions out of self-interested motivations and agendas**. So it is not a matter of any ethical consideration, or a moral reasoning to act out on one's own self-interests, but in fact people will do so naturally as human nature is intrinsically selfish and is always predisposed to act according to self-interests.

Psychological Egoism was considered deeply by **Thomas Hobbes** (Who authored *Leviathan* in 1651), and **Jeremy Bentham** (1748-1832). Thomas Hobbes believed that if left unchecked, the pervasive self-interests of persons would lead to endless destructive conflict for power and resources, and so out of rational self-interest people should agree to social contracts. Because it is in everyone's self-interest for society not to devolve into permanent wars over power and resources. Jeremy Bentham actually devised a scale of measurement between pleasure and pain, demonstrating that all humans have a fundamental desire to seek pleasure and avoid pain.

## For Psychological Egoism Perspective

It can be considered that Psychological Egoism is not only functional, but even beneficial to not just the **survival of the individual**, but the **group** as well. Perhaps the most plain and clear example of such is individuals conforming to communal traffic expectations when driving. If every individual when driving simply did what was in their best interests to get to where they wanted to go the quickest, the resulting lack of organization, rather than accidents or just delays, would prevent traveling individuals from getting to their destination safely or efficiently. However, it can be seen that what is in the best interest of each individual is to conform to some restraints of personal self-interest, and thus traffic flows more efficiently and safely, allowing everyone to get to their destinations more effectively. To clarify, this example indicates the idea presented by Thomas Hobbes, that in fact due to each individual's agenda of self-interest, it is best to conform to traffic rules, as it is in everyone's self-interest in order to avoid traffic chaos.

**Jeremy Bentham** further developed the idea and presented that all decisions, no matter how selfless they appear, are in fact powered by selfish self-interest. For example, someone may share a post on social media of someone in monetary need, not out of selfless interest to aid the person that has the

need, but rather to appear before society as a good and caring person, and so boost their social status. Even on a physiological level, it could be said that the reason a person does good things is because doing acts of charity or showing compassion releases hormones that literally make a person feel good for doing them. If it feels good to do good, the supposed ethical considerations and intentions of an individual are irrelevant.

### **Against Psychological Egoism Perspective**

While it is harder to isolate a large-scale example that is contrary to the idea of ethical Egoism, human behavior that goes against this perspective is apparent, for example, police, firefighters, military – all who put their lives in danger for the sake of others. While Psychological Egoism could argue that such lives are still selfish, because such dedications physiologically make persons feel good, it could be counter argued that whatever good feeling one may get, such feelings could not possibly be greater than the stress, bodily harm or fear of death imposed on such persons.

Another example would be people who voluntarily care for, and even put themselves at risk to help, assist, or save animals. The reason this example is of such note is because even the discomfort and personal sacrifice of having and raising children can be interpreted as being motivated by the self-interest of preserving one's own genes through procreation. However, in the case of sacrifice to care for animals not even of the same species, the self-interest even at preserving your own species is removed, and so presents a sound example of actions taken outside the agenda of self-interest.

Finally, some of the best examples that demonstrate actions taken contrary to self-interests can be found in the likes of abstractions such as forgiveness, loyalty, duty and honor. In many cases an individual will forgive someone, stay loyal to a person, organization or ideology, perform their duty, or remain honorable – even if such actions are not in the person's best interest, (that is to say they could get more of a benefit for themselves personally by not performing the action), and they most certainly do not, and will not feel good about, or because of performing the action.

### **Ought vs. Is**

**Ethical Egoism** is an argument of what the individual *ought* to do, through reason, rationale and considerations. This means Ethical Egoism makes a moral judgment on how people should make their decisions and go about living their lives. It asks the question of whether people *ought* to be self-interested or not. Ethical Egoism is derived from consequential ethics theory that poses the core guide to all decision making stems from the consequences that result from the decision. So Ethical Egoism states that what people *ought* to do is focus on the only consequence of concern when making a decision, which is whatever result has the most benefit for the individual making the decision. It by nature is a proponent of “survival of the fittest”, and rejects Utilitarianism, its opposite, which states that actions should instead maximize happiness and well-being for all affected individuals.

**Psychological Egoism** is an argument of what an individual *is* by nature going to do, having nothing to do with being conscious of it or not. This means it is more of a definition, and observation, and is not a moral judgment on what humans should or should not do. It does not ask, but states that doing what is best for oneself *is* what a person does by natural predisposition.

Psychological Egoism makes no moral judgments on what should or should not be done, but rather states that acting selfishly *is* what people will do by nature. It makes this statement to the depth and completeness, where it says that goodwill and even seemingly selfless actions ultimately stem from a selfish agenda to increase social standing, acquire friends or even fundamentally powered by the fact that doing good physically makes a person feel good – and so that very feeling is the selfish motivation for doing any good at all. However, it allows room for Utilitarianism in that if people rationally seek what is best for themselves, they may accept community restraints on striving for self-interest, because restricting everyone’s self-interest to some degree, is in fact in every individual's best self-interest.

## E. Egoism

Plato uses the myth, *The Ring of Gyges*, to illustrate the concept of morality and egoism in his book *The Republic*. In *The Ring of Gyges*, a shepherd named Gyges finds a magical ring that can make him invisible. Gyges uses this power to seduce the queen and murder the king. Glaucon, the narrator, asks whether we would, like the shepherd, pursue our own interests selfishly since there would be no way of getting caught. Glaucon argues that all persons are egoistic and selfish. The only reason people do not always do the unjust thing is the fear of being caught and/or harmed.

**Altruism** is the opposite of egoism. Altruism is the moral obligation to benefit others rather than oneself.

There are three variants of egoism:

1. **Psychological egoism** describes human nature as being completely self-motivated and self-centered. Also called descriptive egoism, it claims that people always act selfishly, to benefit their own happiness or self-interest.
2. **Rational egoism** claims that actions are rational only if they promote self-interest. The most notable proponent of rational egoism is Ayn Rand, whose writing *The Virtue of Selfishness* outlines the theory.
3. **Ethical egoism** says that people should act in their own self-interest.

**Strong rational egoism** states that not only is it rational to pursue one’s individual interests, but it is irrational not to pursue them. **Weak rational egoism** holds that while pursuing one’s own interests is, in fact, rational, there may be circumstances where not pursuing them may not be considered irrational.

Critics of psychological egoism claim that it is impossible to prove what motivates people to behave the way they do in all instances. Is the satisfaction gained from doing something for someone else the by-product of the action, or is it the purpose of doing the action? According to the theory, we *always* act in our own self-interest; it is not enough to show that people *often* act to promote their own interests.

**Ethical egoism** is the normative theory that the promotion of self-interests in accordance with morality is best. People ought to do what is in their own good. **Individual ethical egoism** states that one ought to be concerned only with one’s interests, and one should be concerned about others only to the extent that the concern contributes to one’s interests. **Universal ethical egoism** holds that everyone ought to look



out for and seek after their own best interests, helping others only when it is in their own best interests to do so.

## F. Contractarianism

Another normative moral theory that can be considered a form of egoism is **contractarianism**. The term applies to moral theories that focus on self-interest and denote a real or hypothetical agreement between a group and its members. All members of a society are assumed to agree to the terms of the social contract by their choice to stay within the society. Moral norms get their normative power from this mutual agreement. The best social rules are those we would accept if we chose rationally. Each person must make his/her choices depending on what others will do and in cooperation with them. Contractarians feel that moral and political authority should not be automatically grounded in concepts such as divine will or faith in the goodness of human nature.

**Social Contract Theory** was introduced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in 1762, advancing ideas from Hobbes and Locke, who preceded him. According to Rousseau, a person who does what is in his/her own highest interest is doing what he/she wants. A person who does what he/she wants is free. In organized human society, there are times when our interests and wants are in conflict. Therefore, because we value our lives, we sign the Social Contract and obey it until our lives are threatened by it. A society geared to do what is best will retain everyone's freedoms (in slightly different forms), which are enjoyed so perfectly in the state of Nature. He held that society, which was created through a first, unanimous contract, carries the true will of the people, which is the **General Will**. The General Will is distinct from the State, a product of a majority vote, which can only give us the Will of All. Therefore, the General Will is nothing other than the repository of everyone's free choice. If forced to conform to it, a person is only forced to be free.

The idea of the social contract was revived in the 20th century by the philosopher John Rawls, who was concerned with the issue of fairness and social justice. He believed in a system in which social cooperation is followed by a form of established government. In advance, the members of this hypothetical society are to decide what is acceptable, determining the principles of justice. To remain objective, people should aspire to make choices for society as if behind a **veil of ignorance**, a state of naïveté that prevents them from knowing their own social and economic positions in society, which allows for judgments that are impartial. This would prevent each party from choosing the principles of justice that only benefitted themselves.

## G. Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism is a consequentialist (goal-based) theory of ethics. It is a normative theory designed to tell us what we should do, which is to follow the set of rules that results in the best consequences. It states that the best consequences are those involving the least pain or unhappiness and the most possible pleasure or happiness. Utilitarianism is a system for making ethical decisions that takes into account the amount of pleasure or pain that an action will cause.

## The Utilitarian Theorists

A utilitarian is someone who accepts the principle of utility and whose concern is maximizing the value and utility of the universe.

**Jeremy Bentham** was a psychological hedonist. He believed that the desire for pleasure and aversion of pain were the only motivation for human actions. He defended the principle of utility and did not promote selfishness. The **principle of utility** states that an action is right if it produces at least as much (or more), or an increase in the happiness, of all affected by it over any alternative action. The principle of utility's core beliefs are:

1. Pleasure and happiness have intrinsic value.
2. Conversely, pain and suffering have no intrinsic value.
3. All other outcomes only have value based on whether or not they cause happiness or prevent suffering. This type of value is referred to as either instrumental or extrinsic value because it represents usefulness as a means to an end—with that end being intrinsic value.

Bentham created the **hedonic calculus** to calculate the best, or right, course of action. The hedonic calculus measures **hedons**, which are units of pleasure. To use the hedonic calculus, one should measure or estimate the following seven aspects of the proposed action and its expected consequences:

1. Intensity: How intense is the pleasure/pain?
2. Duration: How long will the pleasure/pain last?
3. Propinquity: How soon will it occur?
4. Certainty: How likely is it to occur?
5. Fecundity: How probable is the action to produce more pleasure?
6. Purity: Will pleasure be mixed with pain?
7. Extent: How many people will be affected?

According to this formula, a right act is the one that produces the most pleasure of all possible acts in a given situation. An act that results in an increase of pleasure is good; acts that produce more pain than pleasure are bad.

**John Stuart Mill** basically agreed with Bentham. He also proposed that the best thing to do is maximize happiness/utility/pleasure (which also involves minimizing unhappiness/ disutility/ pain). His goal was to find the greatest happiness for the greatest number. The main difference between the two is that Bentham judges pleasures only in terms of his seven factors; Mill, however, thinks some kinds of happiness were innately greater than others, as was shown by people favoring one over the other.

In his work *On Liberty*, Mill defended Bentham and Utilitarianism. Mill did not want society to live under a contract, but he acknowledged that people in a society should be grateful for the protection that is given, and therefore certain conduct is expected. He was a staunch proponent of individual rights. He believed that people should avoid harm to others as they go about their business. If one takes an action that harms others, then society should take control of the situation. This is called the **Harm Principle**, which for Mill is the only justification for the limitation of liberty. Mill did not support selfish indifference.

Mill also argued that free speech is crucial to the greatest happiness for the greatest number. He thought that restricting free speech prevented knowledge, and that happiness can only be achieved through knowledge. Free speech was necessary to promote knowledge and learning.

Utilitarian justifications are forward-looking (consequentialistic) in nature. All the questions about the justification of punishment (general justification, title, and severity) will be answered by appealing to the utility (value) of the consequences of an action. All punishment is, according to the utilitarian, intrinsically bad. This is because it involves the infliction of pain, or some other consequence normally considered unpleasant. Thus a system of punishment is justified only by its consequences.

**Systems of punishment** are usually claimed to reduce crime by three means: deterrence, incapacitation, and rehabilitation. One must also evaluate punishment on utilitarian grounds by asking certain questions about effectiveness and rationale.

The main criticism of utilitarianism is the argument that there is more to ethics than happiness, and that, regardless of the consequences, some things are just right or wrong. Since consequentialism determines moral rightness solely based on the consequences, it denies the influence of circumstances or the intrinsic nature of the act or anything that happens before the act. Another criticism of utilitarianism is how to determine what will make people happy. In order to apply utilitarian theory to real world situations one would need to know the exact outcome of any action, how it would affect every person involved, and what “happiness” means to each.

## Subtypes of Utilitarianism

- Act utilitarianism

States moral actions are the ones that will produce the most utility in the situation. The value of an action is not determined by law; an action is moral when it benefits the most people. Not killing a specific person will prevent sadness for that person's family. Opening the door for the person carrying a box will make that person happy. In some situations, the pain and pleasure are weighed out for the greatest utility in direct calculations. For example, five people are shipwrecked with no food. If they kill and eat one person, four people have a chance to survive (happiness), but one will die (pain). If they do not take this action, all five will die (pain). The act that has the greatest utility, then, is for one person to die, because that choice leads to more happiness than pain. There is no consideration given to the act of murder itself as right or wrong. If the greatest utility is served by this murder, then it is right.

- Rule utilitarianism

States that moral decision-making should abide by a set of rules that will generally tend to maximize utility. Working from the example above concerning the shipwrecked people, a rule utilitarian might not choose to kill one to save everyone else, because he/she assumes that if everyone broke the rule “do not kill an innocent person” the consequences would turn out far worse than if all five people died. To a rule utilitarian, having a law against murder is good because if everyone follows the law, society will be more orderly, because people won't kill each other randomly, and people can be in public and private spaces without fear.

**Consequentialism** holds that actions are right insofar as they generate good consequences and minimize bad ones.

**Act consequentialism** evaluates individual actions based on their consequences.

**Rule consequentialism** focuses on how rules or policies tend to generate good or bad consequences.

**Utilitarianism**

which holds that actions are right insofar as they produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number.

**Ethical egoism**

which holds that people should only seek to benefit themselves.

In terms of justice, a rule utilitarian believes the state has a function in meting out punishment, because the law says it is a state function. An act utilitarian may see justice as an individual responsibility; often vigilantes display act utilitarian thinking: “If I kill this serial murderer, more people will be safe.” The fact that there is a law against murder may be irrelevant to the utilitarian.

## H. Utilitarian Ethics: Epicurus, Bentham & Mill

Utility ethics is the belief that the best course of action is the one that maximizes pleasure for the majority. This idea was first championed by Epicurus, and later by Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. All three of these thinkers argued that the morally correct course of action is the one that produces the most happiness for the most people.

### Weighing the Options

Regina's company produces tables. Through research, the company has found that out of 100,000 tables produced, one is likely to collapse after many years of use. The probability that ten tables from Regina's company may collapse over time is relatively low, given that they have sold approximately one million tables.

The company's financial struggles are well-known. Regina is considering issuing a recall for the tables now that they know the flaw, but this will likely bankrupt the company if they publicize it. Bankrupting the company will put a large number of people out of work.

In this chapter, we'll explore the ethical approach of utilitarianism and how it might be applied to Regina's challenge. We'll examine the **philosophies of Epicurus, Jeremy Bentham, and John Stuart Mill**.

### Epicurus

Epicurus was an ancient Greek philosopher who focused on how to make decisions that would lead to the greatest amount of happiness. He was known as a hedonist because of his focus on maximizing pleasure.

In short, Epicurus was an ancient Greek philosopher who was interested in the nature of human pleasure.

In his text "Letter to Menoeceus," Epicurus takes a different approach to pleasure than what is commonly thought. He states that pleasure can be defined as the lack of pain in the body and suffering in the soul. This definition provides a more comprehensive understanding of pleasure, as it encompasses both physical and mental well-being. Consequently, Epicurus' view on pleasure is more holistic and nuanced than the typical perspective.

Epicurus would likely say that Regina should enjoy the higher profits and not worry about the potential problems with the faulty table. He wasn't simply interested in what felt good in the moment—he also believed that the consequences of our actions matter, and that other people matter, too. His approach is one of the earliest forms of utilitarianism, which holds that the best action is the one that increases pleasure for the greatest number of people.

The term "utilitarianism" can be thought of as referring to the usefulness or utility of an action in terms of its ability to increase pleasure or human happiness. However, what if it is unclear what the best action is? For example, if there is one table in 100,000 that will bankrupt Regina's company if it is recalled, should she recall it even if only a few people will ever be affected? Would it be more beneficial to keep the company running and allow all employees to maintain their livelihoods, or would a different option be more preferable? A utilitarian would weigh the pros and cons of each potential outcome to come to a conclusion about what would be most beneficial for the greatest number of people.

## **Jeremy Bentham**

Something very intriguing and exciting is that Jeremy Bentham's work "An Introduction to the Principles and Morals of Legislation" continued a utilitarian hedonist approach Epicurus established two thousand years prior.

Believe it or not, this title actually starts out with a bold statement about human beings: that we are all unique and special.

Our text begins with the claim that humans are governed by two masters, pain and pleasure. These two forces, our author claims, help us to know what is moral. He argues that not only our own pain and pleasure matter, but the pain and pleasure of all human beings are of equal importance.

In the case of Regina's problem at her table company, Bentham could look at the situation and ask which action would truly maximize happiness for the most people. Using Bentham's approach, Regina would weigh the needs of her employees against the concern for very few customers.

She would need to weigh the intensity and duration of pain or pleasure that might result for both groups. The fallout of a bankrupt company for all her employees and the repercussions of a faulty table for a few customers would need to be taken into account.

Bentham's approach has been called moral calculus because it allows individuals to calculate the potential benefits of actions in terms of happiness. Bentham's thinking on this matter can be remembered by thinking of how he could determine the benefits of actions using his moral calculus.

## John Stuart Mill

John Stuart Mill disagreed with Jeremy Bentham's view on pleasure, arguing that while everyone's pleasure is equally important, not all pleasures are equal. Some pleasures are more valuable than others, and some pains are more troubling. However, Bentham might argue that enjoying an ice cream cone is the same pleasure as a conversation with a loved one. Mill saw variations in the importance of one pleasure over another.

He was also eager to highlight the rights of individuals and focused on this in his text, *On Liberty*. Mill wanted to emphasize that unless an action hurts someone else, others do not have a basis for regulating what a person should do. Our emotions also help guide our actions.

Whether to recall the tables is a question that involves both the law and Regina's own feelings. The laws where her business is located might dictate that she must order a recall or face penalties, since her faulty tables could cause harm. She may feel guilty about not disclosing potential dangers of her tables, which could lead to injuries for customers.

The experiences she has had will play a role in how she tackles this moral dilemma, not just the total number of people affected by her decision.

**Utility, or the maximization of pleasure, is the guiding principle of utilitarianism.** This ethical theory, first developed by Epicurus, holds that the best course of action is the one that maximizes pleasure for the greatest number of people. Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill were two other notable philosophers who contributed to the utilitarian tradition.

Epicurus' definition of pleasure as the absence of pain in the body and of trouble in the soul makes him an early hedonist, someone who prioritizes maximizing pleasure in their life.

### Contemporary Utilitarianism Theories

The weighing of the costs and benefits of economic decisions (**cost benefit analysis**) has been widely regarded as being similar to utilitarianism. CBAs are used to justify policies aimed at protecting human life and the environment. One choice is better than another if it is the least costly compared with the benefits expected.

**Preference utilitarianism** states that the rightness of an action depends on whether it satisfies the interests of everyone involved regardless of whether there is any pleasure involved.

## I. Egoism, Ayn Rand & James Rachels

In philosophy, egoism is a theory of ethics and morality based on self-interest. Rational egoism, as put forth by Ayn Rand, holds that selfishness is a virtue, while human sympathy, as espoused by James Rachels, argues that egoism is immoral.

### Two Views of Egoism

Some topics in philosophy can be seen as a boxing match, with two different sides fighting for their own point of view. Jabs can be exchanged between the two opponents, who may have drastically different arguments. Today, we'll explore a philosophical debate on the topic of egoism. You'll learn what this term means and what two thinkers named Ayn and James had to say about it.

### Rand vs Rachels

In the first corner of our imaginary boxing ring, we have Ayn Rand, a prolific writer and philosopher whose views are highly controversial. Even the title of one of her books, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, is sure to spark debate.

One might wonder how selfishness can be proposed as a good thing. Can being selfish be ethical? James Rachels is ready to fight Rand on her views. *Egoism and Moral Skepticism*, an essay by Rand, is often seen as a disturbing doctrine by those who disagree with her. However, Rand and Rachels do have two major things in common.

First and foremost, both Rand and Rachels are interested in ethics. Secondly, in line with their shared initials, both philosophers aim to identify what is ethical in a rational way.



### Rational Egoism

Ayn Rand's beliefs regarding altruism are controversial, to say the least. She argues that altruism, or selflessness, is actually a cause of moral corruption and resentment. This belief runs counter to the commonly-held view that altruism is a virtue. She points out that living in this way is not ethical. This is a direct challenge to most moral philosophies, which hold that selfless acts like helping others are the epitome of moral behavior.

Rand argues that a person who is always acting in the interests of others can end up lacking guidance for what to do in life, since their focus is on meeting the needs of others instead of themselves. She contends that altruism permits no view of humans except as sacrificial animals. Her approach of **rational egoism** provides an alternative in which a person's self-interest is discovered through the application of rational principles, and then acted upon.

The term "egoism" can be easily remembered by thinking of the word "ego" in relation to a person's own self. Furthermore, it is important to note that just because a person acts in their own self-interest, it does not mean they are free to do whatever they want without regard for consequences.

Rational self-interest dictates that one should want to live in a stable society. To achieve this, one must behave in ways that are consistent with a stable society. So, engaging in illegal or otherwise harmful activities is not in one's self-interest. It might appear that typical moral philosophies have suffered a major blow from Rand. Her argument reveals that altruism can be detrimental to the development of a moral community. **Selfishness, to Rand, is merely a matter of acting in one's own self-interest rather than the unethical way of life one might first imagine upon hearing this.**

## Human Sympathy

**James Rachels** is ready to fight back against this perspective with his own rational arguments. In his essay, *Egoism and Moral Skepticism*, Rachels rejects the idea that an egoist will behave in ways that ultimately benefit society and keep it stable. It should be noted that an egoist is aware that others are not egoists. This knowledge affects their behavior.

It may seem counterintuitive, but it is actually in the egoist's best interests for others to not be egoists as well. An egoist can easily exploit someone else's kindness or weakness if they are altruistic. Rachels warns that this could lead to some very questionable behavior.

He disagrees with the belief that people should only look out for themselves. Rachels makes a strong argument against this by explaining that human beings are more complicated than that, and are capable of caring for others. When we see others suffering, we have a natural response to feel sympathy. Rachels says it is easy to forget how fundamental this feeling is to human psychology. Is it advisable for an individual to prioritize their own interests above all else, as Rand suggests? The debate over whether altruism is innate or learned behavior continues. Those who argue each point of view continue to duke out this topic.

In "The Virtue of Selfishness," Ayn Rand argues that selfishness is not immoral. Rather, selfishness is simply acting in one's own self-interest, a rational approach. Rand blames altruism for causing much of the moral corruption in the world. She believes in rational egoism, where a person's self-interest must be discovered through rational principles, and then acted upon. This doesn't mean a person only does what they want, but that they figure out what is rational. **It is important to act in a way that will maintain a stable society.**



In "Egoism and Moral Skepticism," James Rachels argues that egoism is a troubling doctrine. According to him, egoists are forgetting how important sympathy is to being human.

According to Rachels, focusing solely on self-interest ignores our natural response to the suffering of others. Additionally, if taken to an extreme, egoism could lead to morally questionable behavior that exploits others.

## J. Ethics of Care Theory: Carol Gilligan & Nel Noddings

The ethics of care is a theory that emphasizes the importance of responsibilities, compassion, and relationships in ethical decision-making. It is often used as a feminist approach to ethics, as it takes into account the unique experiences and perspectives of women. In this chapter we will discuss Carol Gilligan and Nel Noddings, specifically paying attention to the private space and comparison to the ethics of justice.



Feminist thinkers, like **Gilligan and Noddings**, see women's experiences as mostly **missing from conversations on ethics, and aim to correct this problem.** They want the importance of the **private sphere of relationships** and the **interdependence among people** to be **better recognized and appreciated.**

## The Gender Gap

To better understand their perspective, let's look at a moral test that researchers conducted on a young group of children. This was not a typical academic test, delving into questions about morality and what is right and wrong to do. The researchers were interested in determining whether the children were progressing in their moral development. The six stages of moral development, as outlined by psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg, range from a child choosing the right behavior based on whether they will be punished or not, all the way up to the highest stage in which a person chooses their actions based on universal ethical principles, like what is fair and just. The researchers compared the responses of boys and girls to questions about how they would act in certain situations, and they noticed a pattern.

On average, the finding was that girls develop morally slower than boys. For example, few girls seem to be developing as quickly regarding their moral reasoning.

## Ethics of Justice

So, first things first. Were the girls' moral growth stunted? Gilligan suggests that the girls were not immoral, but that the scale itself was flawed. What are the origins of the ethical system this test is based on? How did the creators of this ethical test come to their understanding of ethics? Gilligan's "ethics of justice" is a popular approach among philosophers for addressing abstract moral problems. This approach focuses on rationality and making decisions that are just and fair. This approach is focused on concepts such as fairness, equality, rights, and freedom. The ethics of justice is mainly concerned with universal moral rules that can be applied in all situations. An example of this would be the principle that cheating on a test is always wrong. This is a universal rule because it is not just wrong in some situations, it is in fact, always wrong.

In short, the researchers used an ethics of justice approach in their testing. They considered children who could make decisions based on universal principles to be the most morally developed. The boys were the best at making decisions based on these principles.

## Ethics of Care

Gilligan argues that the girls have likely been exposed to other ethical frameworks. They have typically learned an ethics of care instead of justice. This means that they are more likely to take care of others and act fairly towards them, rather than make sure that everyone gets what they deserve. The care-focused ethic is largely concerned with how to appropriately respond to the needs of others in complex, real-world situations. This approach emphasizes concepts such as responsibilities, compassion, and relationships.

The ethics of care takes into account the individual circumstances rather than blindly following universal rules. The context of a situation is crucial in deciding how to respond. For example, if you find yourself with too many family obligations, you must consider the best way to handle the situation.

It is unlikely that there is a universal principle that can be applied to all situations. Instead, it is important to consider the specific context, your needs, and the needs of others. This theory focuses on our response to other people in various circumstances, rather than on the consequences of actions or our duties.

Gilligan argues that the lack of female involvement in discussions on ethics has led to a focus on abstract justice over caring. She believes that caring has been undervalued as a result.

Is it possible that little girls would tend to perform better on a test that focuses on the ethics of care rather than the ethics of justice? This is what Gilligan claims. She is not saying little girls are born more caring than boys, or that they will always act more caring, she is simply stating that, although girls and women are often socialized to be more caring, this does not mean that they always make ethical decisions based on an "ethics of care" approach. Boys, on the other hand, are typically taught different values that may lead them to a different approach to ethical decision-making.

## The Private Sphere

Nel Noddings, another philosopher, has her own views on care ethics. She argues that our personal experiences, such as those in our family and home life, present us with many ethical dilemmas.

You will notice that there are many situations that are not addressed by an ethic of justice when you think of the twists and turns you have had in any important relationship - family, friends, or romantic partners. The care-focused ethics theory is often associated with feminism, as it emphasizes the experiences of women in the field of morality. Many scholars, such as Gilligan and Noddings- both feminist thinkers, believe that it is important to include a diversity of perspectives in fields that have been traditionally dominated by men. The ethics of care focuses on human beings as interdependent, rather than independent from one another. We are concerned for each other and others are concerned for us. This affects our understanding of what is morally right to do.

## K. Human Morality & Ethics According to Adam Smith

Adam Smith was an 18th-century Scottish economist and philosopher who made important contributions to the fields of philosophy and economics. He is responsible for many of the modern philosophical economic theories including **the invisible hand**.

Companies often justify their decision to avoid ethics by saying "it's just business" - many don't see the moral implications of economic decisions. In contrast, Adam Smith was all about the practical side of economics and often rooted his economic systems in value ethics.

In the 18th century, England and Scotland were in the midst of the **Enlightenment**, an intellectual movement that emphasized individual reason and logic. This movement gave rise to the scientific method, the social contract, and ideas about freedom and liberty. These concepts were so powerful that they led to the American and French Revolutions. In this world, scientists and philosophers are constantly searching for universal truths. Smith was no exception to this and searched for these truths himself.

How did Smith manage to integrate Enlightenment ideas into philosophy and economics? He sought to promote economic systems that were compatible with **natural laws**, or universal moral truths determined by nature. Some people think an economic system should make them happy but others disagree on what makes the economy moral. Smith thought that natural laws should dictate an economic system, and that these systems should be stronger because they're less likely to break down.

The most moral system that best fits with the universal laws of nature is the **free market**, where there is little to no government intervention. In this system, consumers and vendors direct the economy, with the government staying out of the way. Smith believed that the best way to reflect universal natural laws was through a **laissez-faire** system, which is free from government intervention. In this system, competition and individual choice are key, and Smith believed that this was the most moral way to operate.

The "**invisible hand**" refers to the idea that **individuals acting in their own self-interest can unwittingly benefit the economy as a whole.**

Smith was also interested in personal ethics because he believed that an economic system is composed of individual people. He believed that the Enlightenment was focused on the power of the individual, which is why he looked to the individual person as the basis for morality. In a free market economy, competition is driven by self-interest, which is moral. Any action motivated by self-interest is, therefore, a moral action.

Adam Smith observed that being interested in others is usually in your own best interest since it enhances your social value, which can in turn lead to more economic opportunities. As a result of everyone acting in their own self-interest, the invisible hand creates a positive outcome for society as a whole, according to Smith. This has been described as being guided by an invisible hand. The invisible hand is a metaphor to describe the unintentional social benefits that come from individual actions.

## L. Virtue Ethics

The first systematic description of virtue ethics was recorded by Aristotle in his famous work, ***The Nicomachean Ethics***. It expands on the understanding of ethics due to its heavy dependency on the concept of virtue. According to Aristotle, when people are better able to regulate their emotions and their reason, they acquire good habits of character. This, in turn, helps us reach morally correct decisions when we are faced with difficult choices. More simply put, Virtue is a lot more than just following the rules. Ethics are all about being a good and virtuous person – which to be, you have to commit yourself to being an excellent human. Ethical virtue is all about feelings and actions. Moral obligations arise from virtues (Athanasoulis, 2004).

There are **three main branches of virtue ethics**, each of which outlines virtues in different ways. **Eudaimonism**, for example, believes that virtues benefit humans in some respect - a viewpoint that Aristotle upheld when he asserted that humans were happiest when they were exercising their own excellence. Aristotle believed that the function of a human was in reasoning and that the life well-lived is one based on reason. The **second branch** of virtue ethics is **agent-based**, in which the agent or rational individual determines what is virtuous to do intuitively by observing what they think to be admirable, etc. The **third branch** of virtue ethics is the **ethics of care**. This branch emphasizes care and nurturing as the primary basis for virtuous behavior, as opposed to justice or reason. Ultimately, all branches of virtue ethics aim to promote virtuous behavior.

## Platonic Soul

The Platonic soul is made up of three parts: the **logos** (mind), **thymos** (emotion), and **eros** (desire). Each part has a specific, defined function in a balanced and peaceful soul. Following the ideas of his teacher Socrates, Plato considered the soul as the essence of people, and responsible for deciding how we behave. Plato considered the soul to be an eternal occupant of our being that is continually reborn in subsequent bodies after our death.

Aristotle, following Plato, defined the **soul** as the **core or essence of a living being**. He also argued against the soul having a completely separate existence. In Aristotle's view, a living thing's soul is its own activity. Plato saw the soul as a ghostly occupant of the body. In Aristotle's view, the soul is part of a living body and thus, not immortal.

Although the soul is not a tangible object, it is not separable from the body in Aristotle's view. By his account, the soul has three components: our passion, our faculties, and our states of character. Based on these components, his notion of the soul parallels our current notion of the mind. Aristotle defines supreme good as an activity of the rational soul in accordance with virtue.

## Virtue

Virtue can be translated as excellence and described as harmony of the soul's parts. Aristotle thought of virtues as states of character. According to Aristotle, there are two basic types of virtues: moral and intellectual.

- **Moral virtues** describe feeling, choosing, and acting well. There are eleven moral virtues: courage, temperance, liberality, magnificence, magnanimity, proper ambition, truthfulness, wittiness, friendliness, modesty, and righteous indignation. Moral virtues are acquired by habit and must be cultivated. They are acquired with effort and developed through practice. Aristotle also describes non-moral virtues as being anything less than the human ideal. These are normative values about which traits are worthy of esteem.
- **Intellectual virtues** are described as a kind of wisdom acquired by teaching. Aristotle identified nine intellectual virtues and divided them into three types: theoretical, practical, and productive. The most important intellectual virtues were types of wisdom: *sophia* (theoretical wisdom) and *phronesis* (practical wisdom).

## The Mean

Aristotle argued that each of the moral virtues was a mean between two corresponding vices. Virtue is a balance point between a deficiency and an excess of a trait. It consists of finding an appropriate middle ground between two extremes; therefore, each virtue has not one opposite, but two. The point of greatest virtue lies not in the exact middle, but at a **golden mean**, which is sometimes closer to one extreme than the other.

## Morals

Virtue ethics furthers our understanding of morality because of the emphasis they place on the role played by motives in responding to a moral question. Certain virtues are a necessity for correct moral decisions - they require correct motives. While other moral theories share a difficulty in dealing with complicated moral calculations over what action should be taken or which moral duty should be acted upon, **virtue theories remove the difficulty**. Once one is successful in becoming the person one wants to be, making correct moral decisions will simply come naturally.

## Eudemonia

Eudemonia is usually translated from Greek as happiness or well-being, and in the context of virtue ethics, “human flourishing.” It has some of the same connotations as “success,” since in addition to living well it includes doing well. Eudemonia is an objective state rather than a subjective one. Aristotle refers to happiness as an activity, which distinguishes his conception of happiness both from our modern conception of the word and from virtue, which Aristotle calls a disposition. We define happiness as an emotional state, as something we are, rather than something we do. To Aristotle, happiness characterizes a well-lived life, regardless of the emotional state.

In the Western philosophical tradition, Aristotle states, the most conspicuous illustration of eudemonia is the proper goal of human life. Exercising the human quality of reason is the soul’s most nourishing activity. Like Plato before him, Aristotle argued that pursuing eudemonia was an activity only achievable in the human community. Aristotle believed that virtue is necessary for happiness, while Plato said virtue is enough for happiness.

Although eudemonia was first popularized by Aristotle, it now generally belongs to the tradition of virtue theories.

## M. Comparing Virtue - vs. Consequentialist & Non-Consequentialist Ethics

According to most philosophers, we should be good by trying to be good. But, various systems of ethics, moral standards of behavior, have different ways of approaching this.

### Consequentialism

morality is judged based on the consequences of an action. So the action itself is what is being judged.

### Non-consequentialism

also judges the morality of an action but does so based on whether the action adheres to moral codes and duties.

### Virtue ethics

do not judge actions, but instead seek to answer larger questions about leading a good life. These ethics focus on virtue not as a moral duty but as an intrinsic personality trait.

## Chapter 5: Quiz

### 1. How does consequentialism judge morality?

- a. By the consequences of the act.
- b. By the intention behind an action
- c. By the logic behind a thought or belief
- d. By the fairness of legal and social punishments or consequences.

### 2. What makes an action utilitarian?

- a. When it follows the moral law of the society.
- b. When it creates the best benefit for the person who performed the action
- c. When it benefits the greatest number of people in the best way possible
- d. When it creates the best benefit for the person who performed the action.

### 3. Deontology, the 18th century philosophy of Immanuel Kant, is based on the idea that:

- a. It does not teach people how to act.
- b. We are always morally obligated to do what is good
- c. We can never know the difference between right and wrong
- d. that an action can be considered right or wrong regardless of whether it leads to good or bad consequences.

### 4. Under the natural law theory, a law is only 'good' if it is what?

- a. Strict
- b. Moral
- c. Simple
- d. Complicated

### 5. A person who behaves in a way that appears to benefit others but is actually motivated by their own needs is engaging in which of the following?

- a. Psychological egoism
- b. Normalized egoism
- c. Deceptive egoism
- d. Ethical egoism

### 6. What makes ethical egoism different from psychological egoism?

- a. It sees selfishness as a positive thing, not a negative thing.
- b. It states that moral actions should be motivated by self-interest, not that they naturally.
- c. It is focused on self-interest and human actions.
- d. It describes all actions as being self-interested, but makes no moral judgment.

**7. According to Jeremy Bentham, what two factors should legislators consider when creating the laws?**

- a. right and wrong.
- b. The laws were easy to understand.
- c. Pleasure and happiness have intrinsic value.
- d. All of the responses are correct.

**8. Gilligan and Noddings emphasize the importance of which of the following?**

- a. The interdependence of human beings
- b. The indifference of human beings
- c. The independence of human beings
- d. All of the answers are correct

**9. The eudaimonic approach to well-being is an alternative to the hedonic approach offered by \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. Plato
- b. Aristippus
- c. Aristotle
- d. None of these

**10. What do consequentialism and non-consequentialism have in common?**

- a. They both focus on individual scenarios, not larger questions about how to live.
- b. They both judge morality by individual actions.
- c. They both seek to define a universal moral code that applies to any situation.
- d. All of these are shared by consequentialism and non-consequentialism.



# Chapter 6: Morality within the Western World / Religion and Ethics

## A. The Relationships Between Morality, Law & Religion



*“Morality is defined as beliefs delineating what is right and wrong or what is good and bad behavior”*

**Morality** can be seen as a set of beliefs that dictates what is right or wrong, or what is considered good or bad behavior. It's important to note that these moral codes are not simply written rules set by the state, but rather a fundamental set of guidelines that govern our behavior.

Conversely, **laws** are the mandates that a state requires its citizens to follow. Obeying a law is not optional; it is compulsory. Failing to do so results in penalties and punishment. However, **religion** is a set of beliefs centered around faith in a higher power.

Morality is defined as beliefs delineating what is right and wrong or what is good and bad behavior. Religion is a belief system based on confidence in a higher power. Throughout history morality and religion have been intertwined. Many argue that religion authored morality. Others argue morality created religion.

There are a few commonalities between the two. Both often contain a code of conduct. They both can be used to motivate people to do good. They can also be used as a means of control.

The main difference is that morality is based on personal beliefs, while religion is based on faith. Faith is believing in something without proof. This can make religion a more powerful force than morality.

## B. Religious Traditions



*“Religion is a belief system Based on confidence in a Higher power.”*

The Bible has been a very popular book for teaching morality in the West for centuries. This makes sense considering what a central role it plays in Judeo-Christian ethics. The earliest versions were translated into Greek 250 years before Christ was born and offered insight into ethics that is quite different to other ancient texts. One of the foundations of morality for the Israelites is that "morality resides in one righteous God". This idea is also a cornerstone for Judaism and Christianity, who both share principles in common from the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament.

The Ten Commandments are a list of important guidelines that prohibit immoral actions such as murder, adultery, stealing, and coveting. Throughout the Old Testament, stories emphasize the importance of obeying God, taking responsibility, and exhibiting willpower in order to lead a morally upright life. Whereas Christianity includes the Old and New Testaments, Judaism is based only on the Old Testament. The New Testament provides numerous ethical principles, most of which are focused on the concept of love. Christianity, therefore, has a richer ethical tradition than Judaism. Christians on the other hand, are called to love God above all else and to love their neighbors, as demonstrated by the story of the Good Samaritan. The Bible has been a significant source of morality in America since the first colonists arrived, but other religious traditions have also had an impact on Western culture.

The table below gives a broad overview of the main world religions.

Major World Religions
<b>Christianity:</b> The Bible suggests that God is merciful and all knowing. It is believed that personal salvation occurs through faith.
<b>Judaism:</b> Being the oldest monotheistic religion, the importance of history, laws, and the religious community is outlined. It is believed to be responsible for influencing both Islam and Christianity.
<b>Islam:</b> It's believed that God instructed the prophet Mohammed to write the Koran. Muslims are instructed to avoid greed at all costs by being generous and obedient.
<b>Hinduism:</b> The principle of ahimsa, or nonviolence, is a cornerstone of moral guidance in many cultures. Ahimsa encompasses both our actions and our feelings towards others; therefore, hatred towards another person would violate the principle of ahimsa. The focus should be on detachment from pain and desire, and choosing actions that will cause the least amount of harm.
<b>Buddhism:</b> The Dalai Lama asserts that morality does not have a divine origin, but that it helps people achieve happiness many times through reincarnation. Happiness to self and others derives from being loving, compassionate, patient, forgiving, and responsible.

**Karma** and **dharma** are two concepts that are central to both Hinduism and Buddhism. Karma is the belief that a person's actions have a direct impact on what happens to them in the future, both in this life and in future reincarnations. Dharma, on the other hand, is the principle of living in accordance with natural law and being in harmony with the universe. Dharma is about a person's right actions towards others and gods. On the other hand, the three monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam see events in life as the will of God. Monotheism is the belief in one god, as opposed to multiple gods.

## C. The Divine Command Theory (deontological ethics /theory)

### Divine (**God**) Command (**Laws**)

Divine Command Theory, a theory on the relationship between human moral behavior and divine law, argues that humans have moral obligations and ethical choices because they are commanded to make them. More simply put, According to Divine Command Theory, things are considered good or bad by the will of God and God alone.

We can say that it is an approach to ethics that views God as the source of moral laws. The theory of moral obligation rooted in the commandments of God has existed for hundreds of years. Yet, over time, many people have questioned whether right and wrong come from following this theory. Divine Command Theory states that something is good if it is in agreement with what God commands. However, the theory itself is complex because it raises questions about the nature of good and evil and; human free will.

There is much debate among philosophers and moral theorists about the Divine Command Theory and divine command ethics because some object to the connection between religion and ethics. Furthermore, these theorists seek a means for moral deliberation apart from religion. And yet Immanuel Kant, a philosopher not usually summoned to support Divine Command Theory of Ethics, nevertheless, argued that humans depend right now on God to meet the preferable requirements of morality that they can't live without.

**Divine Command Theory** is the view on morality that **what is right is whatever God commands**

who **believe** in the **existence of God**, accept the divine command theory.

**Theists**

unsure if **God exists** and look for another way to think about moral reasoning.

**Agnostics**

do not **believe in God** and reject the theory.

**Atheists**

a Platonic dialog containing the **Euthyphro dilemma**. According to this dialog, Plato raises the question of **whether an act is right or wrong**. If the former is true, then God's commands are **arbitrary**. If the latter is true, then **right and wrong are above God**, who is supposed to be **sovereign and omnipotent**

**St. Augustine** and **St. Thomas Aquinas** both wrote extensively about the concept of God's moral law, and their takeaways differed considerably. Whereas Augustine believed contemplation of God's moral law was the highest good humans could attain, Aquinas thought that God created humans to fulfill the highest calling by acting in ways that are in line with His divine plan.

Some theorists argue that Divine Command Theory is problematic because it leads to the **Euthyphro Dilemma**. According to the Euthyphro Dilemma, there are only two choices about what God decrees:

Either actions are right because God commands them, or God commands right actions because they are right. If God exists, and creates what is right by commanding them, then he could command anything and so make anything moral by commanding it, including cruelty. However, no divine command theorist could accept this if it were true. So, it would thus be fair to say that, since morality cannot be arbitrary, then divine commands are not arbitrary. If this is the case, then right and wrong would exist either independently from God's authority, or intrinsically through God's nature. That is to say either, if God does exist He cannot be considered as all-powerful or superior, because morals would be “above” Him - absolutes that He did not create, but instead is subject to following. Or two, that God does not define or create what is right, but if He exists, could literally be the embodiment of what is right, and so defines what is right the same way a circle defines what a circle is.

## D. Perspectives on Morality: Autonomy, Heteronomy & Theonomy

### What Are Theonomy, Autonomy, and Heteronomy?

The philosophy of what is right and wrong is known as morality.

**The three main moral philosophies are theonomy, autonomy, and heteronomy.** Theonomy is when someone uses religion to explain right from wrong and govern their morality. **Autonomy and heteronomy focus on other principles one might use to govern their life.**

More specifically, **autonomy refers to the idea that one governs their morality and decisions**, while **heteronomy follows the idea that an individual is governed by their cultural and spiritual influences.**

### Moral Autonomy

Moral autonomy is the ability to make moral decisions independently of external influence. This includes the ability to form and act on one's own moral principles.

#### **Below an example of each of the philosophers**

- **Kant** believed that reason, rather than desire or other motives, should play a key role in autonomous decision-making.
- **Nietzsche** believed that autonomy could be achieved through responsibility and sticking to a principle, even if it came at a personal cost. However, he did not believe that this principle could be found in religion, but rather in something that the individual felt was worth pursuing.
- **Kohlberg** believed that individuals should think critically about rules, evaluating their effectiveness and usefulness. In the modern era, moral autonomy is often seen as compatible with other belief systems and religions.

**These philosophies emphasize the importance of creating personal values and developing a sense of self-awareness.** Piaget stressed the importance of discovering one's own laws and regulations through a process of decreasing egocentrism and focusing on others.

## Analyzing Autonomous Moral Principles

The concept of moral autonomy can be complex and difficult to understand.

The idea of following personal autonomous moral principles may seem ideal at first glance; these principles involve making decisions for oneself without outside influence and pursuing a course of action regardless of the perceived moral intent but on personal judgment.

Shouldering responsibility can be a difficult task, but it is essential to maintaining a high level of professionalism.

Additionally, an autonomous society can have laws that are constructed by other people.

A perfectly good example of this is that it is important to be able to justify one's autonomous principles in a democracy. If an individual cannot do this, their argument will not be persuasive. Therefore, **it is possible that an individual's autonomous beliefs may not align with the rest of society's views on ethics or the law.** In such cases, individuals may need to decide whether to break the law based on their own principles.

## Heteronomy

The concept of heteronomy posits that an individual's behavior and moral decision-making are significantly influenced by external factors. This moral philosophy is the direct opposite of autonomy in that the individual has no say over their moral choices, no matter their rationalization. The authority of heteronomy comes from external sources. Heteronomous beliefs can therefore encompass a wide range of topics, from the sociological to the occult.

Heteronomy offers a scientific perspective that can help explain social phenomena, such as a decline in moral behavior. For instance, a sociologist may be able to attribute this decline to specific economic conditions. A psychologist might also focus on the social and unconscious forces affecting their patient. Additionally, a belief in an outside spiritual force can lead to great reservoirs of inspiration.

The main downside to a heteronomous worldview is its spiritual implications; believing that outside forces in the world affect everyday morality negates the individual's role in life. The belief that free will is an illusion is a rejection of responsibility, rendering individuals helpless in the face of external forces.

## The Definition of Theonomy

Theonomy is a system of morality based on divine law. Its adherents base their ethical decisions on the teachings of their chosen religion, but may do so according to their own personal preferences. It is a system of governing one's moral principles, as opposed to a system of government. Philosopher Thomas Aquinas was the first to experience and formulate the idea of theonomous law.

Aquinas' belief differed from theocracy in that it focused on the individual, rather than on the Old Testament. Aquinas believed in natural law, or God within nature. Christianity has always been based on the belief that **God's laws are the only true guide to proper moral behavior**. This view is known as **theonomy**, and it teaches that the Bible is the ultimate source of authority on all matters of right and wrong. Christians who follow theonomy believe that it is their duty to obey God's laws in every area of their lives, in order to please Him and receive His blessing.

**Theonomy supports autonomy by promoting free will and rationalization, and heteronomy by being influenced by external forces.**

## Theonomy Analysis

**Theonomy** refers to **any system of religious beliefs or principles**. For example, those who adhere to astrological thought may be considered theonomous, while a scientist may adhere to the ethical principles presented by their field of study.

A Buddhist may adopt an autonomous view of fundamental principles about the world. This system can be adapted to different situations, based on principles that are morally sound. As long as people adhere to these principles, the system will be effective.

The main drawback of theonomy is that it can lead to serious disagreements between groups. When basic moral beliefs are challenged, many people find it difficult to accept that they might be wrong. As a result, beliefs that do not fit within the scope of one's theonomy become false, which can lead to immoral behavior.

Finally, the three moral philosophies are **Consequentialism**, **Deontology**, and **Virtue Ethics**. The following philosophies reflect a commitment to autonomy and responsibility:

- **Autonomy** reflects one's ability to govern themselves.  
Autonomous moral principles revolve around responsibility and the consideration of others.
- **Heteronomy** is the belief that moral guidance comes from external forces, rather than from within oneself. This philosophy is the opposite of autonomy, which emphasizes self-reliance and independence.
- **Theonomy**, on the other hand, relies on divine law as a source of morality. This belief can exist within any religion or belief system that upholds a higher power.

Two of the **most influential philosophers** in shaping modern notions of **autonomy** are **Immanuel Kant** and **Friedrich Nietzsche**.

**Kant** emphasizes the **role of reason** in autonomous decision-making - one's actions should be driven by **rational freedom rather than by desire or other motives**.

**Nietzsche**, on the other hand, grounding **autonomy** in responsibility, argued that **individuals should be self-governing and self-determining**.

## E. The Role of Covenant in Biblical Law & Morality

A covenant is a type of treaty that binds to two or more parties. There are two types of covenants - a parity covenant is established when the parties involved are equal, while a suzerainty covenant is one where one party is dominant. Covenants are central to the Jewish, Christian and Islamic religions, all of which trace back to the first prophet Abraham. Within the context of the Bible, **covenants** are **agreements between humans and God**. The most important biblical covenant is the Mosaic Covenant, which was established between the Israelites and God. It outlines a number of laws that should be adhered to. There are two types of covenants - conditional and unconditional. A conditional covenant stipulates that the promise will be upheld unless a predetermined condition is met and an unconditional covenant dictates that a party cannot break the agreement. Martin Luther didn't feel that the Catholic Church went far enough in promoting faith and rebelled against the idea of granting forgiveness for sins, known as indulgences. This went against the idea that salvation was conditional.

### Martin Luther's Take on Covenants

The covenant scriptures are a foundation element of the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic religions. Martin Luther, a Catholic monk who inspired the Protestant Reformation centuries ago, had his own opinions on covenants-- it turns out not all Christians agree with Martin Luther's opinion though. Luther advocated the idea of 'faith alone' rather than good works as needed for salvation. He was frustrated by the Catholic Church's sale of indulgences which supposedly brought people forgiveness for their sins. Luther believed that unconditional covenants, such as the New Covenant, were better than ones found in the Old Testament, which are conditional. His teachings have become pervasive in Protestant Christianity, which primarily teaches that the covenant of God is the most important factor and only has faith as a requirement.

## F. The History & Authorship of the Old Testament

The Old Testament is one of the most important texts in Western civilization, yet we know comparatively little about the history of the document itself.

The Old Testament is not a unified text. It is broadly divided into three smaller subunits, each with a number of books. These divisions are important because the texts within them were roughly written about the same themes and at the same time.

- Torah is the basis for much of the Jewish religion. Telling the story of humanity until the time of the establishment of the Hebrew people.
- Nevi'im is a selection of prophecies.
- Ketuvim is made up of historical documents, especially those pertaining to the story of the Kingdom of Israel.

The rise of linguistic studies, challenges have emerged, especially with regards to the importance of Aramaic and Old Persian loan words in the text.

## G. The Christian Belief in Old Testament Prophecy Fulfillment

In Judaism, a Messiah is anyone who is anointed in Israel. Any ancient Israeli king would fulfill the requirements of this definition, including King David and King Solomon. "Messiah" means "anointed one" in Hebrew. The original concept of a Messiah comes from Judaism and the Hebrew Bible.

In the Christian Bible, Jesus fulfilled the role of spiritual Messiah, or a redeemer of sins through his death on the cross and later resurrection. Christianity relies on prophecies from Isaiah, Zechariah, and Micah to argue that Jesus was the Messiah; Judaism rejects these claims.

What is the difference between savior and Messiah? Whilst some religious groups see the role of savior and Messiah as one and the same (such as many sects of Christianity), other religions perceive them as two distinct concepts. In Judaism, the Messiah will be a political leader who claims the throne of Israel and saves the Jewish people from oppression.

## H. Civil Religion in America: Definition & Overview

**Civil religion** consists mainly of rituals, beliefs, values and habits that represent and define a community. An emphasis on a country's uniqueness and exceptionalism can help form the civil religion. This can include elements of faith traditions, such as using the term 'God' or including prayer in political and social settings. For the United States, a sense of being unique and exceptional factors into civil religion.

American civil religion is especially connected with the idea of being special and blessed by a higher power. As soon as they began establishing themselves in the United States, some religious leaders had a very special view of their country. They saw it as their responsibility to take what they'd learned back to the communities around them, even though that took a lot of work. Political leaders also saw this country as different and took pride in what it could do for people who might be struggling.

Let's consider what your life would be like if you felt so special. Imagine that you believe you are destined to move to San Jose, California, where you are going to start up a company that is going to change the world. You believe that this is your destiny and you think it's what you were meant to do

It may seem like you have a higher purpose than the rest of the people in your life at this moment, but it will likely change. You may have trouble admitting to any flaws or mistakes, because you believe so much in the future of your design. You might even steal ideas or take advantage of those you see as incapable; All because it is taking shape in your mind.

19th century Americans were convinced that the US should expand the territory and borders of the country, but today it's more of a topic of discussion. Many people were hopeful that the US's expansion would bring our values to other countries, even if it had to happen through force. This idea was known as **Manifest Destiny**. As a part of your venture to start a successful company, you could also have an infusion of enthusiasm due to the greatness of being a part of history. This is much like the early



Americans who believed they had a future in becoming involved with one great aspect of American history.

## I. The Books of Law and The Gospels

The question of how humanity can come to know what doctrine or system to follow has been a question considered throughout human history by philosophers, theologians, scientists, and all peoples of the world. Some believe there are no objective moral absolutes, and that they are left for humanity to define for itself. Others believe there are such things as objective moral absolutes that can be discovered by humanity on its own efforts through logic, or can be revealed to humanity by divine beings. This is where religions enter human social development, as a majority of the world<sup>1</sup> ascribes to some kind of theological belief system that they look to for absolute moral guidance. In this section the foundations of such beliefs for Christianity will be considered.

Christians believe that The Bible is the authoritative written source for insights on morality and human purpose. The Bible, which literally means “The Book”, is not a single book, but a collection of sixty-six (66) separate books. These books are categorized into two sections within the bible. The first section is known as the Old Testament, and comprises thirty-nine (39) books. The second section is known as the New Testament, and is composed of twenty-seven (27) books.

The first five (5) books of the Old Testament are considered to be the “Books of Moses”, as he is accredited to being the writer of each one of the five. They are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Both Judaism, (that can refer to them collectively as the Torah) and Christianity (that can refer to them as the Pentateuch) accept these books as foundational to their beliefs, and so a foundation to their understanding of morality.

- **Genesis** – Spans ~2200 years from the creation of the world to the death of Jacob.
  - The moral concepts found demonstrate God's omnipotence and omniscience, and so the needs for human humility in submitting to trusting God's perfect understanding of morality and the guidance God provides to humanity.
- **Exodus** – Spans ~400 years from the Hebrews being welcomed into Egypt due to Joseph's great works, to they being enslaved, freed by Moses, and having the Ten Commandments given to them by God.
  - The moral concepts found are the inadequacy of human wisdom and ability to both know, or to follow moral codes of conduct, and, not only an inability to be moral, but a natural inclination to failure and rebellion against them.
- **Leviticus** – This book is a collection of God directly relating to Moses all the expectations that need to be adhered to in order to live in harmony with God.
  - The moral concepts are further reinforced that there is a vast separation between perfection, moral or otherwise, and human nature / behavior. It serves to highlight the

issues humanity needs to overcome, and the truth that because humanity is fundamentally imperfect, it is impossible for humanity to do so.

- **Numbers** – Spans the years from the Hebrews arriving at the land God promised to give them, failing to trust God and enter the land, God's punishment of leading them back into the desert until that whole generation dies, and then returning to the promised land under the leadership of Joshua (one of only two fighters who wanted to trust God at first).
  - The moral concepts taken are the loss of peace and fulfillment in failing to trust God's guidance. That inability to adhere to obedience to the code of conduct God provides, separates humanity from God, and prevents humanity from acquiring the good things it otherwise could.
- **Deuteronomy** – Here Moses restates the history of the Hebrews, and all the expectations and promises of God before Moses himself dies.
  - The moral concept is that despite human imperfection and inability, it is not the law, or morality that changes, it remains the same, and it is humanity that is at fault, and needs to change to conform to an objective and perfect morality.

The first four (4) books of the New Testament are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and combined are known as the Gospels. Each one is a summary of the ministry, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, and each presents Jesus as the Christ, the messiah promised by God, and prophesied throughout the Old Testament.

Each gospel is written on the same central focus of Jesus, however, each author wrote to a specific audience, and so the style and structure on each one is different.

- **Matthew** – Seems to be written to demonstrate to Jews that Jesus was the promised messiah of the Old Testament. This is indicated by the many references the Gospel of Matthew makes to Jesus fulfilling Old Testament prophecies.
- **Mark** – Seems to be written for non-Jews, as is evident at times when specific Jewish customs are explained to the reader almost as an aside. It is also evident in that it relates in an almost excitable way the miraculous power shown by Jesus – presumably in an attempt to convince non-Jews who would have no interest in an ancient Jewish prophecy, that Jesus is important to non-Jews as well.
- **Luke** – Appears to be written to not just non-Jews, but possibly specifically for converts to belief in Jesus. It is the most formal, has a genealogy of Jesus going back to Adam, and focuses on Jesus not just being a fulfilled promise out of Jewish history, but a larger scope of God's plan for all of humanity.
- **John** – Is the most abstract, and philosophically focused. It was written for everyone, and overtly presents Jesus as the eternal Son of God, sent to save all humanity from their sins. It contains the verse known as “The Bible in a nutshell”, which is,

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him, will not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

The word “gospel” means “Good news”, as Christians derive from the gospels the “Good news” that humanity has been forgiven and saved from their sins by God. Christians see in the New Testament gospels that God saved all individuals from their imperfection, and inability to ever perfectly follow any moral code (as demonstrated throughout the Old Testament), not because any human could ever earn such mercy, but only entirely out of God's freely given grace.

For Christians this is the central pillar of all moral implications and concepts. If God loved humanity so much as to offer such forgiveness and grace - in a word, love - then Christians should endeavor to love God in return, and share, emulate and offer that same love to all their fellow human beings. This is absolutely encapsulated for Christians by Jesus Himself in the Gospel of John when He said.

*“A new command I give you: Love one another.*

*As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” John 13:34*

## Chapter 6: Quiz

**1. The human attempt to define what is right and wrong about our actions and thoughts is:**

- a. Morality
- b. Epistemology
- c. The human condition
- d. None of the answers are correct.

**2. Studying the Bible can help confirm \_\_\_\_\_ documents.**

- a. literary
- b. historical
- c. law
- d. None of these are correct.

**3. Those who promote divine command theory typically aim to do what?**

- a. Prove that God does not exist
- b. Prove that God exists through physical evidence
- c. Use specific religious texts as proof that God exists
- d. Demonstrate that it is likely that God exists based on some acceptable premises.

**4. Where does autonomy look to define morality?**

- a. The actions of the individual self.
- b. Traditions, ancestors, or religion
- c. Only religion
- d. Universal laws that guide all humanity

**5. What is morality?**

- a. The universal laws that govern all humans.
- b. An awareness of being alive
- c. A legal code of law
- d. The philosophical distinction between right and wrong.

**6. The concept of heteronomy posits that?**

- a. an awareness of being alive.
- b. any external force, such as ancestors, spirits, or traditions.
- c. laws agreed upon by individuals that are understood to be constructed, not universal.
- d. an individual's behavior and moral decision-making are significantly influenced by external factors.

**7. Genesis means \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. in the beginning
- b. first stories
- c. the garden
- d. a new start

**8. The more secular elements of cultural and political life, including rituals, beliefs, values and habits, that connect to a higher purpose and meaning, often bonding the people of a nation or community together is known as:**

- a. Civic religion
- b. National religion
- c. Political religion
- d. Civil religion

**9. Which event is Manifest Destiny best associated with?**

- a. In 19th century Americans were convinced that the US should expand the territory and borders of the country
- b. .The Acquisition of the Ohio Valley
- c. The Purchase of Florida
- d. The Louisiana Purchase

**10. The belief that the United States is very different from other nations and has a special purpose and set of values is called:**

- a. American destiny
- b. American socialism
- c. American capitalism
- d. American exceptionalism

# Chapter 7: Ethics in Life and Death

## A. Right to Die and Euthanasia

There has been a new issue that has come to light in recent years. You can see this ethical dilemma from many different viewpoints.

For instance, some think it's unnecessary to change how medical professionals have acted up until now.

On the other hand, some people are requesting more stringent regulations on these judgments and what is considered permissible to do. It can be a difficult decision, but sometimes people may wish to end their lives when they are diagnosed with a disease that cannot be cured and current treatment has ceased.

Euthanasia	Assisted Suicide
A doctor is allowed by law to end a person's life painlessly.  <i>The painless killing of a patient suffering from an incurable and painful disease or an irreversible coma.</i>	A doctor assists a patient in committing suicide if they request it.  <i>"Intentionally helping a person commit suicide by providing drugs for self-administration, at that person's voluntary and competent request."</i>

Assisted suicides have been controversial among medical professionals such as doctors, caregivers, and patients. There was a lawsuit involving an individual by the name of **Dr. Kevorkian**. This lawsuit created more controversy surrounding the issue. 10 States in the United States have legalized Physician-Assisted Suicide, and the other 40 states either prohibit it or have no law yet. Oregon is one of the most well-known states because of its Death With Dignity Act. The federal government and all 50 states prohibit euthanasia under general homicide laws. Assisted Suicide laws depend on each state. Between 6 and 15 countries worldwide have legalized one or both practices. Switzerland was the first country to legalize Physician-Assisted Suicide (PAS) in 1937.

Euthanasia can be broken into two categories further

1. **Voluntary passive euthanasia (VPE)** involves the withholding of treatments (such as chemotherapy or surgery), knowing that this may also result in death (principle of double effect). This is the most accepted form of euthanasia and is usually done at the patient's or family's request.
2. **Voluntary active euthanasia (VAE)** entails using lethal substances or forces to cause a person's death. It is the most controversial and problematic. It is generally legally prohibited.

The philosophical distinction between acts and omissions seems natural to distinguish between killing and allowing the natural process of dying. On this account, if a physician does something (e.g., injects an overdose of morphine, which is an action), this should count as VAE. These actions are considered killing

and are generally prohibited. If the physician chooses to do nothing or not do something, it is considered VPE. For example, a doctor may choose not to provide essential antibiotics, which is an omission; this would be VPE. These actions are considered to be allowing an individual to die. Some people hold that there is a moral distinction between acts that cause death (active euthanasia) and omissions that cause death (passive euthanasia). Some consider only passive euthanasia to be morally permissible.

The Patient Self-Determination Act of 1991 gives every competent adult the fundamental right to self-determination regarding decisions pertaining to his/her health, including the right to choose or to refuse medical procedures/treatments. If you have a living will, which is a statement of your preferences for end-of-life care, it could be helpful in situations where you might not be able to make decisions for yourself. For example, suppose you have an incurable disease and are considered terminally ill. In that case, having such a declaration could play an important role in any decision about life-prolonging medical interventions.

These instructions only take effect when the person cannot make a medical decision. A person may also appoint a **durable power of attorney** for health care, i.e., a competent adult designated by an individual to make health care decisions on his/her behalf should he/she become incapacitated. These documents have been very instrumental in resolving ethical dilemmas.

## B. Resuscitation

Some terminally ill patients might decide that they want to sign a "do not resuscitate" order. This could happen if they are aware of their mortality, refuse active treatment, wish to avoid medical intervention, or want to control the time and manner of death.

They would ask their physician for a Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) Order. Physicians have the ethical obligation to honor their patient's wishes regarding resuscitation. DNR orders might be granted for:

- Patients for whom CPR would not provide any benefit;
- Patients who could have permanent damage, unconsciousness, and poor quality of life if they survived CPR; or
- Patients whose quality of life is poor and who wish to forego CPR if breath or heartbeat cease.

Mechanical ventilation is usually the most common form of life support withdrawn when death is imminent. Mechanical ventilation involves tubes inserted through the nose or mouth into the trachea and through a machine, where a patient's lungs are inflated and emptied, allowing blood oxygenation. Some care providers consider mechanical ventilation as death-delaying rather than life-prolonging. Patients can decide if this is an intervention they want during their final days.

## C. Hospice

Hospice care, a holistic and philosophical approach to end-of-life care, emphasizes pain control, symptom management, natural death, quality of life, and providing physical comfort for the patient. Unfortunately, access to hospice services is not fair and equitable in the United States. This is partially

due to governmental limitations on reimbursement to hospice organizations for Medicare patients. Some hospice programs might also ask patients to sign agreements that they must stop any curative treatments. Hospice also requires that patients have a prognosis of six months or less to live to qualify for hospice care.

Some ethical questions concerning prognosis are:

1. **Accuracy:** Considering the unpredictability of disease and the vast number of unknown variables that can influence how and when a person will die, it is difficult to come up with an accurate prognosis.
2. **Six-month limitation:** This requirement leaves out people near the end of life who might have longer than six months to live. These individuals could benefit from the hospice team and the many services it could offer.
3. **Prognosis communications with the patient:** It may be unethical to expect a physician to make a prognosis and inform the patient if the patient's culture does not embrace full and open discussion between doctors and patients about healthcare or death.
4. **Pain management:** Many ethical dilemmas stem from using pain-relieving drugs in terminally ill patients. Some people caution about the fear of narcotics addiction, the value of individual autonomy, and the importance of treating symptoms. Morphine is the most commonly used narcotic for treating pain and other symptoms of the seriously ill. It is beneficial in relieving the two most common symptoms experienced by dying patients: pain and shortness of breath. Some physicians are worried that respiratory depression, a side effect of morphine, may cause death, so they under-prescribe the drug, even for terminally ill patients in extreme pain. However, research has not found that narcotics shorten life or depress respiration in dying patients, even when given high doses.
5. **Nutrition and hydration:** Some of the most emotionally and ethically challenging end-of-life care issues related to nutrition and hydration decisions. This is primarily because of the nature and social meaning attached to providing people with food and water. The United States Supreme Court ruled in 1990 that, legally, artificial nutrition and hydration are not different from other life-sustaining treatments.

United States courts have made the following rulings:

1. Competent adults can refuse these treatments, even if this choice hastens their death.
2. A health care surrogate may withdraw these treatments.
3. A health care surrogate may refuse these treatments on behalf of an incompetent adult.

Another debate focuses on whether withholding food and water is similar to killing or allowing a patient to die. Patients, families, and physicians must come together to determine whether this will benefit or burden the patient. It should provide the patient with enough benefits to outweigh the burdens. This is called the principle of proportionality.



1. **Antibiotic treatments:** Many dying patients are susceptible to infection, often due to several comorbid conditions. Antibiotics won't cure the underlying terminal disease but may relieve distressing symptoms. Some physicians think antibiotics are considered part of routine care. Others believe an infection is a treatable condition unrelated to the untreatable terminal illness and hence find it difficult to withhold antibiotic treatment.
2. **Medical futility:** Medically ineffective treatments are those procedures or interventions that are highly unlikely to benefit a patient. The concept of medical futility leads to many ethical questions. First, can we prevent medical futility from becoming a judgment call made by the health care staff? Second, the fear that some treatments that healthcare professionals deem not beneficial may be considered beneficial by patients, and these may be eliminated. Third, and most importantly, necessary treatments will be labeled as futile to save money.
3. **Terminal sedation:** Terminal sedation uses sedatives to make a patient unconscious when death from the underlying disease is imminent. This may be the only way to relieve the agonial suffering, the profound pain that may occur when a patient dies. Since terminal sedation is a risky treatment, some raise ethical questions about its use, including:
  - Terminal sedation may have an unknown effect on hastening death.
  - Patients who are unconscious and cannot speak for themselves are at potential risk for abuse.
  - How does one value consciousness vs. suffering?
  - Is terminal sedation for patients who don't need such potent relief ethical?
  - How far should people go to relieve pain and other uncomfortable symptoms?
4. **Advance directives:** To avoid ethical conflicts related to withholding or withdrawing treatments and encourage the appropriate care of those nearing the end of life, patients are asked to draw up an Advance Directive or Living Will. An Advance Directive or Living Will is a document used to:
  - State the patient's own goals and wishes concerning medical care;
  - Give specific instructions about treatments, including DNR orders, organ donation, feeding tubes, etc.; and
  - Designate a power of attorney for healthcare who will speak for this person should he/she become unable to express his/her own wishes.

Unfortunately, advance directives and living wills are underused tools. Many who need them don't have them; sometimes, they are not followed even when patients have them. Physicians may believe that following these directives would not be in the patient's best interest.

## D. Suicide

The utilitarian principle argues that a person committing suicide does not break any moral laws once a person has become a burden to self or others.

The issue of suicide is often viewed from a conservative and liberal view. Not in the same political sense we use today, but in the literal sense of these terms.

Conservative View	Liberal View
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Suicide is immoral</b></p> <p>According to Philosopher <b>St. Thomas Aquinas</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suicide goes against the laws of nature</li> <li>• It breaks social obligation</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Suicide can be morally justified</b></p> <p>Philosopher <b>David Hume</b> argued that suicide for the <b>avoidance of misery is moral</b></p> <p>Man has full authority and right to end his own life</p>

## E. Taking a Life

There is a constant ethical battle when considering whether it is appropriate to take a human life. The question always stands, are we preventing further harm? That is usually the balance between whether a killing is condoned or not. People who see themselves as **utilitarians** will place equal value on each life, meaning they consider numbers when making these ethical decisions. We may kill a few to save many.

There are two sides to consider when asking whether it is acceptable to kill others to protect the innocent.

For	Against
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Moral Foundations Theory:</b></p> <p>nurture and protection of the innocent is the <b>basic principle of morality</b></p> <p>Positives of <b>protecting the innocent outweigh</b> the negatives of <b>killing the offender</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Domino Effect:</b></p> <p>Violence only breeds violence</p> <p>Killing in the defense of the innocent <b>allows one person to arbitrarily decide the guilt or innocence of another</b></p>

Think of a recent 2022 example where US military operations killed al-Qaeda chief Ayman al-Zawahri. This was celebrated by many, and with the thought that we have prevented more harm, but with al-Qaeda not being as active, this killing could be regarded as vengeance for the crimes of the past.

From outside perspectives, there are more than just the basic ethical questions to cover:

“The al-Zawahri situation has 2nd and 3rd order effects. Since the US and its allies pulled out of Afghanistan, it has become a haven for the terrorists of the world. So, by taking out al-Zawahri, we are solving several problems all at once. We are keeping the promise of the George W. Bush administration to root out all terrorists and to let the world know that Afghanistan must keep its promise not to allow terrorists (known or unknown) entry into their country. This is one of the agreements they made so we and our allies could withdraw. So, the killing of one has a trickle-down effect, and either way, you slice it, it is an ethical and a moral juggernaut. Ethical killings can be justified by governments and soldiers alike, and the line in the sand that's drawn is based on current and future policy and so forth.” - Dr. Daniel Wolff.

## F. Death Penalty

Capital punishment started with the Romans. The most famous form was crucifixion. Medieval Europeans practiced drawing and quarter. Later on, less painful ways were used during the enlightenment, such as a firing squad or hanging. Currently, we use electric chairs or lethal injection.

The Supreme Court decided that the death penalty (or capital punishment) would not be permitted for minors or crimes committed while a minor. In *Kennedy v. Louisiana* (2008), Louisiana law was overturned to permit capital punishment for the rape of a child.

Two questions emerged:

- Is death too severe a penalty to impose for any crime?
- Is capital punishment compatible with our values about human dignity and decency?

In our society, murder is a crime for which the death penalty is often deemed appropriate. Not only has this person caused the death of another, but it has undermined the fabric of a moral community.

Both opponents and defenders of capital punishment appeal to the sanctity of life. Opponents say life is sacred and no one should take it. Defenders, on the other hand, say that the way to honor the sanctity of life is to execute criminals who have taken someone's life. Many western countries have abolished the practice.

## G. Abortion

The legality of abortion has been a continually argued and controversial topic. Since there are many different opinions on the topic of abortion, it can be difficult to give a yes or no answer. There is much debate about whether the fetus should have rights and what defines life.

In one of the most controversial decisions in the United States Supreme Court history, *Roe v. Wade* (1973) established that most laws against abortion violate a constitutional right to privacy. This opinion, written by Justice Blackmun, overturned all state laws restricting or outlawing abortion. *Roe v. Wade* prompted a continuing national debate over whether a state can deem terminating pregnancies illegal if it chooses to do so. *Roe v. Wade* has reshaped national politics, dividing the nation and inspiring activism. In 2022, this was overturned, and now the power to control abortion laws was handed back to the states.

**Pro-life** supporters are people who are completely against abortion. Some are opposed for religious reasons, possessing beliefs about the personhood of human fetal life. Others view the court's decision as illegitimate because they feel it strayed too far from the text and history of the Constitution.

The **pro-choice** side is comprised of those individuals who believe it is the woman's right to choose whether to have an abortion. Support for *Roe v. Wade* comes from those who view the decision as necessary to preserve women's equality and personal freedom, and those who believe in the privacy of an individual over collective rights.

**The Deprivation Argument** states that an embryo will eventually turn into a human being and that it is **morally wrong to deprive the embryo of its future**

**The Personhood Argument** believes that an embryo is legally and morally considered a person

From the **Natural capacities theory**, an embryo naturally has the genetic potential to become **self-aware**

According to the **Bodily Rights Argument**, the rights of the mother trump the rights of the embryo

It appears impossible for philosophers, religious leaders, medical professionals, or the public to reach a consensus about when personhood begins.

**Judith Jarvis Thomson's** *A Defense of Abortion* is one of the most influential papers in applied ethics. Several of the arguments Thomson makes have become a standard part of the discussion. She believed **a fetus is a person and abortion is not presumptively wrong**. She argues that the burdens of pregnancy are too great of a demand on the rights of a human. A pregnant woman should not be required to act as a "Good Samaritan" to the fetus. Some legal precedents and public opinion support Thomson's conclusion; however, the Good Samaritan reasoning is missing from the Supreme Court's decision about abortion.

Thomson created an analogy to illustrate the moral question. A person wakes up one morning to find that while he was sleeping, someone attached a famous violinist to him, connected by various tubes. The person's body is now the sole support of life for the violinist. If the tubes were to be disconnected, the violinist would die. The violinist needs to stay attached to the person for nine months to heal. During that time, the person's body will supply the violinist with all the nutrients and fluids he needs to live, at considerable risk to the person's health. Thomson's violinist scenario implies that the major moral question is whether or not unplugging the violinist is direct killing (where the killing is an end or a means to an end) or self-defense (protecting oneself from physical harm).

**Mary Anne Warren**, an American writer and philosophy professor, states that **a fetus is not a person, and abortion is not presumptively wrong**. Warren discussed criteria for moral personhood such as consciousness, the ability to reason, the capacity for communication, the ability to have motives and goals, and the ability to have a sense of self. According to Warren, a being doesn't need to exhibit all of these criteria to qualify as a person with a right to life, but if a being exhibits just one or none of them, then it is not a person. According to Warren, a fetus does not meet these criteria; therefore, the fetus is not a person, and abortion is morally permissible.

Other philosophers use criteria similar to Warren's, concluding that a **fetus lacks a right to life** because it **lacks rationality, self-consciousness, or autonomy**. These ideas suggest various developed psychological features not found in fetuses but diverge over exactly which features grant a right to life. There is a full range of plausible options on the issue of whether the fetus is a moral person. For example, **Don Marquis** makes a very unique contribution to the abortion debate. He does **not appeal to the idea of personhood** or religious premises in his strong anti-abortion position. Instead, Marquis

argues that **abortion is seriously wrong** even if we assume that the fetus is not a person. He suggests that abortion is wrong because it **deprives a being of a future**.

**Timeline of abortion laws and events in the US**

1962	1964	1966	1969
<b>52%</b> of Americans <b>supported abortion rights</b> . Effects of thalidomide brought more support	<i>Association for the Study of Abortion</i> is nationally registered. Fight for <b>medically necessary abortions</b> begins	Trial of the San Francisco Nine begins. <b>CA lifted its abortion prohibition</b> allowing medical committees to approve abortion requests.	<i>National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws</i> - first national group to campaign for the <b>full legalization of abortion</b>
The Late 1960s - Early 1970s,	1970	1973	2022
<b>AK, HI, NY, and WA completely repealed abortion bans</b> , and 13 other states expanded their exceptions	A Planned Parenthood center in Syracuse, NY <b>provides abortion services</b>	<i>Roe v. Wade</i> case protected the <b>right to an abortion in all 50 states</b>	<i>Roe v. Wade</i> case overturned. Giving <b>states</b> the right to <b>manage their own abortion laws</b>

## Chapter 7: Quiz

Use the following scenario to answer questions 1-3:

Mary is pregnant, single, and believes she is in no position to support and raise a child on her own. She is afraid the pregnancy might cause her to be fired from her job, so she is reluctant to go the adoption route. She is considering abortion and speaks to various family members for advice while weighing her options.

Her aunt Sara said, “You can’t get an abortion. You’ll be preventing that little person from having a future. They could grow up to do great things. Besides, abortion is murder.”

Her sister Martha disagreed: “It’s not a person yet. The fetus can’t reason or communicate and is not self-motivated, self-aware, or conscious. It’s not murdering if it’s not a person.”

Her cousin Lena advised, “It doesn’t matter whether it’s a person or not. It’s your body. If you don’t want to carry that baby around for nine months, risking your health and job, you don’t have to.

**1. Aunt Sara’s position is most like that of:**

- a. Martha
- b. Mary
- c. Lena
- d. None of the above

**2. Martha’s position is most like that of:**

- a. Sara
- b. Mary
- c. Lena
- d. All of the above

**3. Lena’s position is most not like that of:**

- a. Sara
- b. Mary
- c. Martha
- d. All of the above

Use the following scenario to answer questions 4-6:

Harold was 89 years old, widowed twice, and suffering from dementia. He broke his hip, had surgery, and then developed pneumonia. He stopped breathing and was put on a ventilator; it soon became evident that it was the only thing keeping him alive. He was not conscious, and so the decision was put to his daughter: should they take him off the ventilator and let nature take its course or keep him on the ventilator without any hope of his recovery? His daughter decided to take him off the ventilator.

Sylvia was 92 years old, with a sharp mind, but her body was giving out on her. She had been independent all her adult life, but lately, she had needed help getting around town. Her doctor just diagnosed her with the condition that was going to leave her unable to walk, talk or take care of herself any longer; she would have to be totally dependent on someone else, probably in an expensive nursing

home that would take all her life savings that she was planning on leaving to her grand-nieces and nephews. She started researching medications on the internet that would let her die by drifting off to sleep. She asked her doctor to prescribe some for her.

A convicted murderer is brought into the prison infirmary; he had been jumped and beaten badly. He had severe internal injuries and shattered bones in addition to his external wounds, and he was in great pain. If he survived this beating, he would suffer from chronic pain and disability for the rest of his life. He had been convicted of murdering several people, and he was serving a 135- year sentence. While administering morphine to the convict, the prison doctor administered three times the recommended dose, and the convict died.

**4. Which person participated in assisted suicide?**

- a. Harold's doctor
- b. Sylvia's doctor
- c. The prison doctor
- d. All of the above

**5. Which person participated in Voluntary Passive Euthanasia?**

- a. Harold's doctor
- b. Sylvia's doctor
- c. The prison doctor
- d. All of the above

**6. Which person participated in Voluntary Active Euthanasia?**

- a. Harold's doctor
- b. Sylvia's doctor
- c. The prison doctor
- d. All of the above

**7. When do patients have the right to refuse medical treatment?**

- a. Patients always have the right to refuse treatment.
- b. When the side effects of the treatment could result in death
- c. When the treatment violates their personal religious or moral ideologies
- d. When the patient does not trust the physician

**8. The principle that seeks the greatest \_\_\_\_\_ for the greatest number of people is utilitarianism.**

- a. good
- b. pain
- c. growth
- d. wealth

**9. What is the main difference between voluntary passive euthanasia and voluntary active euthanasia?**

- a. One requires a doctor and one does not
- b. One involves withholding treatment while the other uses drugs
- c. One needs a second opinion while the other does not and is currently illegal
- d. One is more painful than the other

**10. Informed consent protects the \_\_\_\_\_ of patients.**

- a. Privacy
- b. Ethics
- c. Autonomy
- d. Morality



# Chapter 8: Moral Issues in War and Peace

## A. Pacifism

Pacifists want to create peace in the world - the freedom of violence. Pacifism is the social and political devotion to peace as the ultimate solution.

There are a few types of pacifism:

1. Absolute Pacifism - No matter the circumstances, violence is wrong, even in self-defense
2. Conditional Pacifism - In some extreme cases, peace can be created by using some force, when war may lead to less suffering
3. Militant Pacifism - Oppose war and violence by peaceful means, even if it means getting arrested or executed
4. Active Pacifism - War and violence are wrong and should be opposed but not to the point of getting arrested or executed
5. Selective Pacifism - Only oppose certain kinds of wars or violence, such as chemical weapons or nuclear wars, because of the consequences not just affecting the people they are targeting but all other living things.

## B. Justification

**Just wars** are wars that people have widely agreed are permissible. Christian philosophy largely influenced this theory and encompassed three beliefs:

1. Taking a human life is wrong
2. Countries have to defend justice and their people
3. Innocent human life and moral values must be protected, even by force or violence.

The principles of a Just War came from classical Greek and Roman philosophers such as Plato and Cicero. The Christian influence came later from Augustine and Aquinas.

**Just cause** refers to when war is only fought for a justifiable reason with enough moral reasoning. In modern wars, the narrative is usually to defend the innocent, and thus it is regarded as **just**. This works well with the religious literature that many follow, as religious beliefs often line up with defending the innocent.

In 1993, **Just Cause**, was defined at the US Catholic Conference as “force may be used only to correct a grave, public evil, i.e., aggression or massive violation of the basic rights of the whole population”

The Just War Theory provides a guide to act in potential conflicts. There are three terms to be familiar with:

**Jus ad bellum** - the conditions met that justify the use of military force. For any war to be justified, a political community, or state, must fulfill all six of the following requirements:

- Just cause, e.g., self-defense from external attack, the protection of innocents from brutal, aggressive regimes, and punishment for severe wrongs that have not been corrected.
- Right intention, i.e., a state must intend to engage in war only for its just cause. The motivation behind resorting to war must be morally appropriate.
- Proper authority and public declaration, i.e., a state may only go to war if the appropriate authorities have made a decision, usually specified in that country's constitution.
- Last resort, i.e., all other plausible and peaceful alternatives must have been exhausted to resolve the conflicts in question.
- Probability of success, i.e., if a positive impact on the situation cannot be anticipated, then war cannot be resorted to.
- Proportionality, i.e., before the war is started, a state must weigh the universal goods expected to result from it, against the universal evils, such as casualties. (Note: The first three rules are deontological requirements, whereas the last three are consequentialist.)

**Jus in bello** - the ethical manner in which to conduct a war. Refers to the justice in war, or the right conduct during battle. External jus in bello refers to the rules regarding the enemy and its armed forces. The rules are:

- Obey all international laws on weapons prohibition, e.g., regarding chemical and biological weapons.
- Discrimination and non-combatant immunity, i.e., a soldier must discriminate between those who are engaged in harm, and the civilian population that is morally immune from attack.
- Proportionality, i.e., the force used must be proportional to the end the soldiers seek.
- Benevolent quarantine for prisoners of war (POWs), i.e., once enemies surrender and become captives, they are no longer threats, so it is wrong to subject them to death, starvation, torture, medical experimentation, etc. There is still much controversy on the detainment and aggressive questioning of terrorist suspects.
- No means mala in se, i.e., soldiers cannot use means that are evil in themselves, such as mass rape campaigns or genocide.
- No reprisals, i.e., when country A violates justice in war with country B, because these only serve to escalate death and make the destruction of war more indiscriminate. (Note: Internal jus in bello involves the rules a state must follow regarding its own people as it battles against an enemy. These basically mean that human rights are still respected as best they can during the crisis.)

**Jus post bellum**- refers to justice during the last stage of a war. The following principles must be considered:

- Proportionality and publicity, i.e., a peace settlement needs to be measured and reasonable.

- Rights vindication, i.e., the peace settlement should assure those rights whose violation prompted the justified war.
- Discrimination, i.e., a distinction must be made between the defeated country's leaders, combatants, and civilians.
- Punishments #1, i.e., if the country losing the war aggressively violated rights, then the punishment must be appropriate. The leaders should face fair and public international trials for war crimes.
- Punishment #2, i.e., soldiers from all sides must be held accountable for investigation and possible trial.
- Compensation, i.e., a post-war poll tax on civilians, is generally not allowed, and resources need to be adequate so that the defeated country can begin its own rebuilding.
- Rehabilitation, i.e., demilitarization and disarmament, police and judicial re- training, human rights education, etc. (Note: Basically, there needs to be an ethical exit strategy from war)

There are several **just causes** to be familiar with, all under self-defense:

- Invasion - this can include an attack on a neighbor or ally, an attack on the honor of a country, the assassination of a person, sanctions, religious attack, or even a pre-emptive strike.
- Human Rights violations
- Assisting an ally in their defense
- To punish an aggressor - such as when there is a terrorist attack.

## C. Starting a War

The three types of soldiers in a warzone are:

- Fighting soldiers - who are there to fight the battle
- Combat Medics - wearing the bright Red Cross emblems indicating they are not a threat and shouldn't be attacked.
- Chaplains - those assisting in the religious needs of soldiers hurt or dying in war

## The Geneva Conventions

The **Geneva Conventions** are four treaties and three protocols that were established to ensure international legal standards in war. The **rules of war** are in place to inflict as little suffering as possible. These are aimed at prisoners and non-combatants during the war.

The conventions are as follows:

1. "for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field"
2. "for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea"
3. "relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War"
4. "relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War"

These conventions were revised over time and finalized in 1949 and still stand to this day with amendments in protocols. The three protocols that were amended since 1949 are:

- Protocol 1 (amended in 1977) - relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts
- Protocol 2 (amended in 1977) - relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts
- Protocol 3 (amended in 2005) - relating to the Protection of an Additional Distinctive Emblem

## International Politics and Conventions

A **convention** is a set of rules - it pertains to regulations around specific situations on a global scale. A **treaty** is an agreement between two or more countries to terms they agree on. Often this surrounds an issue that affects all parties.

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, was a summit held in Rio in 2012, and it sought to eradicate poverty. It addressed the concepts of improving human lives and the environment around them. Another goal laid out was focused on full employment and lowering inequality.

United Nations Convention against Torture strives to end torture and inhumane treatments. This convention was adopted in 1984, and it pushed nations to stop torture within their borders, with over 150 participants.

## D. Weapons in War

The **Hague Conventions** of 1899 and 1907 address the weapons allowed during the war (only conventional weapons). The Geneva Protocol addresses the use of biological and chemical weapons.

**Non-conventional weapons** (or unconventional weapons) are the weapons that usually don't come to mind when you think of something used in a fight. Weapons such as biological, chemical, nuclear, and ballistics are all considered unconventional. Exact examples are smart bombs, drones, and poisonous gas. On the other hand, **conventional weapons** include landmines, warships, armored vehicles, combat helicopters, combat aircraft, and artillery.

Non-conventional weapons are often used as a **deterrent** to prevent other countries from attacking them. Think of the USA. Why would a smaller nation bomb a carrier in the ocean owned by the US? The retaliation could be much larger than they can handle. The arsenal of weapons available to the USA is much larger than a country without the same military spending or technology. To make war more "fair" or **level the playing field**, a country may also invest in unconventional weapons; this allows them to pose a threat to any aggressor who might be stronger than them. In a nuclear war, there are no winners; this is thus an unconventional weapon that is also a deterrent to others.

In the **rules of war**, non-conventional weapons are mostly not allowed, as they pose a large risk to the lives of civilians.

## Chapter 8: Quiz

### 1. What is pacifism?

- e. The social and political devotion to peace as the ultimate solution
- f. The opposition of peace in all scenarios
- g. An anti-government ideology that justifies the use of violence to achieve political goals for the greater good
- h. A personal, spiritual, or psychological sense of calm

### 2. In general, what do pacifists oppose?

- a. Taking action to support their ideas
- b. The use of violence by a single person, but they are okay with the use of force by a nation or government
- c. Taking action to support their ideas
- d. Killing, warfare, or violence of any sort

### 3. Effort justification occurs when:

- a. People who endure hazing like the group they join more than those who don't endure hazing
- b. People think that a group they joined is better because of what they went through to join
- c. People justify the effort they put into reaching a goal by believing the goal is more worthwhile than it is
- d. All of the answer choices are correct

### 4. Which of the following treaties are established for Geneva Conventions?

- a. "for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field"
- b. "for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea"
- c. "relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War"
- d. All of the answer choices are correct

### 5. Which of the following is NOT a main purpose of the United Nations?

- a. To foster cooperation between nations to try to end social, economic, cultural or humanitarian international problems
- b. To provide a forum for member countries to form an alliance against non-member countries
- c. To maintain world peace and bring countries together for such purpose
- d. Develop relations among countries

### 6. A treaty must be ratified before it can take effect. Ratification means that:

- a. The parties meet in person and publicly announce the treaty
- b. If a party objects to any part of the treaty, that objection must be made in writing
- c. The UN must not approve the treaty
- d. The treaty must be approved by all of the parties to the treaty

**7. Which of these is an acceptable definition of protocol?**

- a. formalized gender rules in a culture
- b. a set of international courtesy rules
- c. child labor laws within a society
- d. a set of norms within a society

**8. Because of their ability to indiscriminately harm \_\_\_\_\_, unconventional weapons are often frowned upon.**

- a. Civilians
- b. Tanks
- c. Officers
- d. Soldiers

**9. What was the largest use of unconventional weapons in history?**

- a. Sarin nerve gas strikes in Tokyo
- b. Pipe bombs in Iraq
- c. None of these
- d. Nuclear bombs in Japan

**10. Non-conventional weapons are often used as a deterrent to?**

- a. prevent other countries from attacking them.
- b. forbidding international travel.
- c. ensure that the most qualified candidate is chosen.
- d. forbidding international travel.

# Chapter 9: Moral Issues in the Economy

When discussing the economy, the three biggest terms to be aware of are **capitalism**, **communism** and **socialism**. All three of these can affect the view of what equality means and play a large role in society's perception of equality, opportunity, and progression.

**Capitalism** - is an economic and political system where a country's economy and trade are controlled by private owners to make a profit.

**Communism** - a social system where the country's economy and trade. They will control how many products are produced, which products get produced, and how much they sell.

**Socialism** - is a system of government and economy where there is limited private ownership, and the economy is thus controlled mainly by the state, aiming at promoting equality and public ownership of resources.

## A. Economic Equality vs. Inequality

The American capitalist system promotes economic inequality, where people are obsessed with "rags to riches" and hard work that promises a good life. It's also motivated towards setting a higher standard of living.

However, the world's wealth distribution always brings ethical questions forward.

People in support of economic inequality claim that diversity in a society is valuable as it pushes people to work harder to keep what they have earned. Economic redistribution violates the rights of those who work to earn those resources. **Progressive tax**, however, has been a discussion and policy for many countries to ensure that the wealthy pay more when earning more money.

**Jean-Jacques Rousseau** asserted that having too much inequality in society can destroy people's freedom as the wealthy minority can act as oppressors or tyrants in society.

**John Rawls** stated that economic inequality could be justified when it benefits everyone - such as when it empowers people to work harder and strive for a better life. He proposed a method called the **veil of ignorance** that will help overcome bias and find ways a society can be structured to improve life. Bias comes from our societal position, where you may view it from only your side, thinking only of how some changes and policies can affect and benefit people like you. There are two principles to remember when people attempt to use the veil of ignorance.

- The liberty principle - Everyone should have as much freedom as they can without harming or impacting the freedom of others
- The difference principle - Everyone should have equal opportunities to grow and live.

## B. Poverty vs. Affluence

Standards of living differ for each person. Depending on where you live or come from, your idea of “basic needs” might differ. In rural areas of South Africa, having safe drinking water within 2 miles of your house might be seen as fulfilling a basic need, while in the US, that would be considered inhumane living conditions. Many countries lay out basic human needs, and in the US, having running water and electricity is a basic standard of living. To be poor is defined as not having enough resources to ensure a basic standard of living

In an **affluent society** or a rich society, there are often people living a wonderful, high-quality life, while many around them are struggling in poverty. However, when referring to **affluence**, the aspect focused on is having a surplus of resources while living a comfortable life. This can be considered affluence if you have money left over at the end of the month after living comfortably. This does not just refer to the rich people driving the best cars.

**Poverty** can cause rising numbers of crimes and cause instability in a society. Many believe, however, that poverty cannot be fixed by just giving money to an impoverished community but rather by promoting long-term change in communities, such as focusing on education and having community improvement programs.

## C. Morality of Justice and Fairness

The statue of Lady Justice is blindfolded because **justice** should be blindly applied. No matter your socioeconomic status, history, culture, or anything else, you should be treated fairly and in line with others.

This means we should be treated equally in front of any court or within the rules of law. You should be prosecuted for only the crime you are accused of, nothing above it (e.g., just because you scream at your children does mean you should be sentenced longer for the crime of shoplifting).

It also implies that all people who commit crimes should be punished. True **fairness** would be applied to everyone the same. If you are sentenced for shoplifting to a fine or a few months in prison, someone from a different socioeconomic status should be treated the same.

Now, in theory, that sounds okay, right? Well, if an adult steals a bunch of candy from a store because it feels fun, and a poor person who just had a baby steals a bag of diapers from the store, up to the same value as the candy, do they deserve the same punishment?

If Pete can afford the 100-dollar fine for being caught stealing a video game, but Joe can't pay the 100 dollars for stealing a bag of cereal after being homeless for a few months, does that mean that Joe deserves prison time?

These questions all relate to **justice**. Is it truly possible to treat justice blindly? Without considering an individual's circumstances, what is fair, might leave you questioning the ethics.



**Fairness** is the freedom from prejudice and the quality of people being treated equally. What is right or wrong is known as the principle of **morality**.

## D. Social Power Theories

Max Weber - the name should be annoying by now - also defined **power**. He stated that it is the ability to achieve your goals with or without society's support of your goals. We have to understand three power models in this section.

### The Marxist Model

Marxism, named after Karl Marx, is an economic, social, and political philosophy. This model surrounds the ideas of conflicts between classes and their economic power. It focuses on the effects of capitalism on economic development and labor and supports a worker uprising to change capitalism into communism. Marxists believe it is normal to have revolts within a society where workers will fight against capitalism. Society gets divided into **non-owning workers** and **non-working owners**. The result of this is also known as **alienation**. He iterated that when workers repossessed what they had created and worked for, alienation would cease to exist, and class divisions would be overcome.

It highlights that the governing body implements policies and rules and gives power to those in the higher socioeconomic classes that rule society. Some ideals in this model are:

1. Power stems from control and ownership regarding assets, property, and wealth
2. The government controls the state, and the political process can be manipulated, forcing the people to live within an unequal economic structure without a choice.
3. The government controls what is taught to society as they control the educational system

### The Pluralist Model

Pluralism is a political philosophy that recognizes how power is divided in society. Power is distributed among different groups, and these groups may form subgroups of people with similar ideologies - such as churches and unions. These groups exist to influence governments, represent minority interests, ensure governments take all their citizens into account, promote political participation and respond to changes in the world. There are **insider** and **outsider groups** in the pluralist model. The followers of Pluralism are known as **pluralists**. Their beliefs include:

- Power is distributed and unequal
- Laws and policies are made through negotiation and compromise end up being fair to all parties involved
- Groups provide more power and give more representation
- Bigger groups will have a larger influence.

Having these beliefs in mind, it all connects to the common good. Pluralists may argue that the idea of conflict and dialogue is necessary to have social harmony.

**Insider groups** are agricultural groups (farm associations), labor groups (unions), and professional groups (lobbying organizations). They are well established and often work well with the governing body because of their power or position in their target community.

**Outsider groups** are, on the other hand, **outside** contact with the government. These groups don't have close business relationships with the government; examples include animal welfare protest groups, the CND, political groups in favor of one candidate, and grassroots activism groups. Since these groups don't have the same recognition as **insider groups**, they may try to convert the public, thus having protest groups, resulting in attention from the population, but not insider groups initially.

Lacking this recognition from the top, outsider pressure groups seek to convert and mobilize public opinion, often using demonstrations and rallies. These demonstrations often attract more attention in the press and from citizens than insider groups – which is implicitly portrayed as a sign of their weakness in media content.

## The Power-Elite Model

The **power elite** are the people in the dominant positions in three fields: **state security, economics, and politics**. The power elite usually stems from a dominant country. Power is concentrated among the wealthiest people. Traditional or religious authority can also determine power. These powerful people are very hard to enter and are usually predetermined with or without an election. These members can determine the economy's direction, control profits, and distribute wealth among the population based on their own choices. They will share the belief that the government has the primary duty to ensure the business is thriving.

The US is a country that has been thought of by many as being governed by a power-elite model. Government control comes from the military, large businesses, and top elected officials.

## E. Business Ethics

Businesses must figure out how to act ethically towards clients, suppliers, distributors, competing businesses, and employees. Similarly, employees must act ethically towards the company, customer, and community in which they work. A business's reputation can significantly impact its success, and often, what begins as an ethical case will later become policy or law. **Business ethics** ensures that policies are set up to ensure acceptable behavior by organizations and employees. It enhances quality behavior among employees, builds the company's reputation, and leads to high levels of profitability

A **fiduciary** is someone who has been entrusted with the responsibility of taking care of the money or assets of another. Businesses must consider their shareholders and investors when making decisions and cannot pursue personal interests and gains over their fiduciary duties.

Companies are also expected to act with **social responsibility**. This means acting as a responsible part of the community in which it operates. Social responsibility can include donations to local charities,

volunteering in the community, socially responsible business practices, advocacy campaigns, and community outreach. The principles of business ethics are vital for both managers and employees.

Corporations must decide how to act ethically in several situations, including customer safety, employee safety, political contributions, hostile take-overs, industrial espionage, executive pay, tax avoidance, bribery, and corruption. Ignoring the principles of business ethics may lead to an entire organization's collapse due to reputation loss.

Most companies have a code of ethics. This code outlines the moral ambitions of the company and is what drives the culture and climate of the business. Large corporations often have a code of ethics for the company, in addition to a code of ethics for individual departments. This covers new updates to policies, laws, or new issues that have developed.

## Principles of Business Ethics



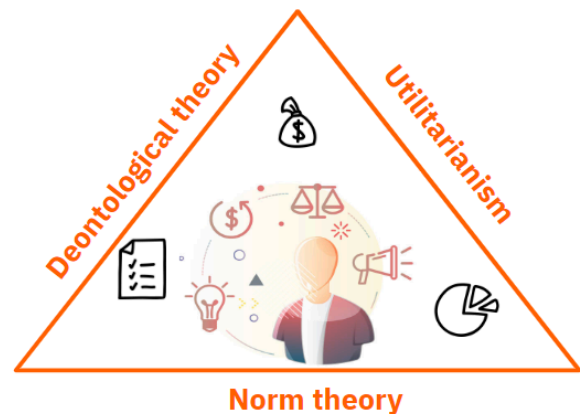
**Ethical obligations** include that all parties be treated equally, without bias, a company must maintain the consumer's trust, and advertise accurately.

In a traditional **laissez-faire economy**, the government does not regulate business, except for stating that: monopoly is illegal, the minimum wage is mandatory, and unions are allowed.

**Deontological theory:** Upholds the right of all human beings to be respected and treated with absolute dignity. Morals and set rules should be above the right results.

**Norm theory:** It identifies the importance of having common standards and rules of right and wrong followed by an entire business organization or group

**Utilitarianism:** It brings the perspective of the above rules. Focus is on the greatest good for a significant segment of society



## F. Ethics in the Workplace

Ethical policies are vital for companies to maintain the respect of their employees, clients, and customers.

**Effective Ethical Policies** are the company's core values and lay out the steps to be followed by the employees

**Ethical Reporting** are avenues for employees or outsiders to report unethical behavior and allows employees to become whistleblowers.

**Ethics Training Programs** set out training on ethical policies as a foundation and foster a supportive environment

## G. Ethical Problems in Business

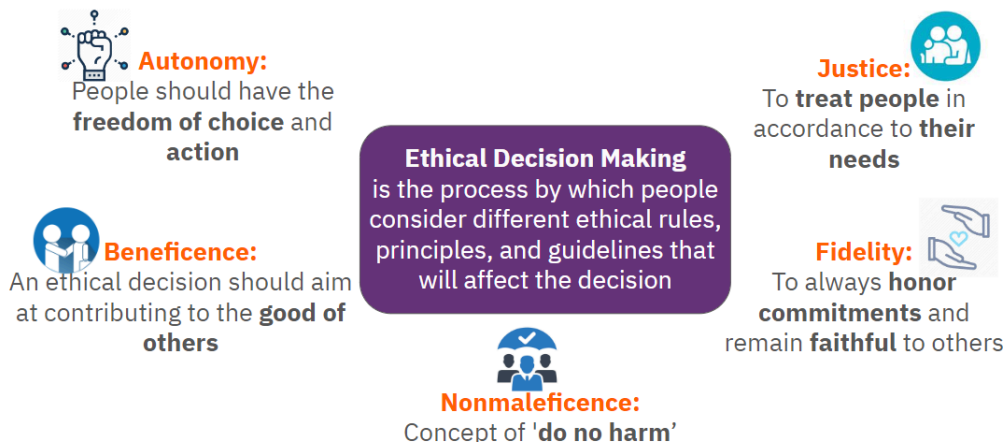
An ethical problem or an ethical dilemma, is the state in which a business must choose between behavior that is most advantageous to them or behavior that is just, fair, and morally right for stakeholders. There are several causes to ethical problems in businesses, for example:

<b>Integrity Lapses</b>	<b>Conflict of Interest</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs transparency, proper checks and balances and adherence to a code of ethics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be avoided by making the company's mission a central part of its behavior</li> </ul>
<b>Problematic Relationships</b>	<b>False Advertising</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be refrained by avoiding a decision that has one party's material interest in the outcome</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be avoided by carefully evaluating communications for accuracy</li> </ul>

Ethical policies are vital for companies in order to maintain the respect of their employees, clients, and customers.

## H. Ethical Decision Making

**Organizational citizenship** is the perspective that employees have whereby they extend their behaviors beyond the normal duties of their position, such as assisting coworkers, focusing on the future and representing the company well. If a company sets up their culture in a way that employees want to behave in such a manner, it can be beneficial to both parties. A good company will allow employees to make good and ethical decisions.



## I. Ethical Climate in Organizations

Organizational ethical climate refers to the moral atmosphere of the work environment and the level of ethics available within a company. There are five climates that exist in a company:

- **Caring** - Concerned with the well-being of others and supports employees in their career development, aiming at growth for the people. There is usually open communication between leaders and subordinates. This climate is based on fairness, goodness, and great leadership.
- **Law and Order** - Driven by codes of conduct and adherence to them. Laws dictate this climate, focused on the idea that legal issues may occur if unethical behavior occurs. This climate will ensure codes are followed over addressing employee issues.
- **Instrumental** - Driven by self-interest. This climate can often have the highest amount of unethical behavior in a company, as it is based on selfish decisions that benefit the company or leader personally.
- **Independence** - Promotes self-governance in a company where employees are given a wide range of choices of responsibilities and tasks. This is ideal in an environment where there are highly skilled workers who are driven. However, it can lead to unethical behavior because of the lack of repercussions after these decisions are made.
- **Rules** - Concerned with procedures, policies, and rules. All decisions are made based on the rules within a company, and employees are fully aware that breaking these rules could result in losing their job. This often leads to a climate where problems may not be solved creatively for fear of breaking protocol.

Understanding the needs of an organization will help determine the most optimal ethical climate. In different cultures, we need to apply these in context. Diversity is key in understanding what is necessary to drive an organization forward in a community.

A diversified workforce is based on three principles

- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Diversity
- Affirmative action

## J. Equal Employment

Equal employment opportunity is the principle that maintains equal accessibility of the chances for employment through merit. This ensures that there will be fair treatment, fair employment, and no harassment and discrimination in the workplace, leading to a multi-talented and diverse workforce.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is the federal agency responsible for the enforcement of federal laws that stop discrimination. The EEOC was established through the **Civil Rights Act of 1964**.

This commission investigates and instructs by setting rules and regulations to protect the rights of people.

Examples of the anti-discriminatory acts that was set up by the EEOC are:

- The Rehabilitation Act - federal agencies may hold programs, this act prohibits any discrimination based on disability
- Equal Pay Act - focused on gender-based discrimination, it prohibits women and men being treated differently in terms of payment for the performance of similar duties and jobs.
- Americans with Disabilities Act - protects all individuals with disabilities against discrimination in public life including jobs, transport and schooling opportunities.

It protects people by setting some of the following rules:

- There has to be a transparent recruitment process - where people can file charges during their employment process at any point
- Some questions may not be allowed during an interview - this defends parties against discrimination based on their sexuality, relationship status, disability, religion, etc.
- Employees' privacy must be protected.

Equity in the Workplace is characterized by:

- A diverse productive workforce
- A more equitable and accessible work environment
- An inclusive environment where all employees are valued
- A work environment free from discrimination
- A level playing field for employee success

## K. Affirmative Action

The Civil Rights Act also contributed to **affirmative action**, in order to right the wrongs of the past, of years of discrimination. **Title VII** protects people against discrimination based on their ethnicity, gender or religion.

In 2016, the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, laid out a **quota system** for their medical program, stating that the program required the following: “69% black African, 19% Indian, 9% coloured, 2% white and 1% other”.

In the US, there are several things “wrong” with the above statement - what we deem as appropriate language, and also, the fact that **this is illegal in the USA**. This is **not** what we can deem as **affirmative action in the USA**. In the USA, we try promote equality by using situations such as the following example:

Susan moves to El Paso, Texas. She opens a craft shop and posts her job ad on Facebook in a local community group for crafters. She notices that she only got two hispanic applicants, being fully aware that the community is at least 80% hispanic, this strikes her as odd, so she decides to reach out to the local church and community leaders to help her find some locals to employ as to ensure she is not just employing from one group of people, but rather considering her demographic.

Having a **culturally diverse group** may allow a business to better understand their area, understand what a community needs and grow a business significantly.

This is affirmative action. You have to be aware of the difference between a quota system and affirmative action for your exam. Always consider the context in which some things may be said or advertised, where it may be seen as “favored” towards a specific group because of where it was posted that only represents a small portion of the demographic, and that is when affirmative action might be necessary. Some nations, as indicated above, use quotas that set aside a certain number of positions for certain kinds of people, racial groups, ethnicities, males or females. This process is discriminatory against the people who don't qualify or fit the need of the race or gender based quota system. Employing a more ethical set of principles, as we see in the combination of: embracing diversity, equal employment opportunity and affirmative action; we are able to maximize the potential of all employees by valuing diversity interpersonally and institutionally. Moreover, we are able to expand into even broader categories like: ethnicity, race, gender, disabled status and veteran status and capitalize on the widest category possible of qualified people. So, we are not only embracing the legal elements of Affirmative Action, but taking it one step further by combining the ethical and culturally diverse elements of a potential employment pool.

## Chapter 9: Quiz

**1. Which one of the following is NOT a characteristic of capitalism?**

- a. Competitive markets
- b. Extensive government planning
- c. Free exchange
- d. Private property

**2. Which one of the following statements would Jean-Jacques Rousseau agree with?**

- a. People are basically bad, and we need to be controlled by living in groups.
- b. People are basically bad, but we can be taught to be good if we have the proper education.
- c. People are basically good, but we do bad things because of the way we live in groups.
- d. People aren't good or bad because there's no such thing as goodness or badness.

**3. Which of these is the best example of poverty?**

- a. A poor country that is unable to allow its society to develop.
- b. Crime-ridden areas of the American South where drugs are sold.
- c. A college student behind on tuition, couch surfing, and eating leftover ramen.
- d. All of these

**4. According to Karl Marx, which group benefits from having a religious belief system?**

- a. The wealthy capitalists
- b. The wronged
- c. The poor
- d. The sinners

**5. The key addition to multiculturalism that moves society to cultural pluralism is learning to \_\_\_\_\_ other cultures along with one's own.**

- a. value the contribution of
- b. accept the presence of
- c. understand
- d. tolerate the beliefs of

**6. Mills describes the relationships and class alliances among the United States political, military, and economic elites. According to Mills, the Power Elite are those who occupy the dominant positions in the?**

- a. corporate world only
- b. dominant institutions
- c. United States military only
- d. all answers are incorrect



**7. Which of the following answer choices demonstrates an example of sustainability in business?**

- a. A company is very profitable and will sustain its earnings for many years.
- b. A company makes decisions that will allow it to last for many years.
- c. A company makes a product of durable material that will last a long time.
- d. A company focuses first on helping society and ends up making a profit.

**8. Which of the following is the best example of a conflict of interest?**

- a. An administrator allows their past business relationship with a parent to influence a new school policy.
- b. A teacher is promoted to an administrative position.
- c. A teacher accepts an inexpensive end-of-the-year gift from a student.
- d. An administrator establishes a new dress code policy.

**9. Which of the following is FALSE regarding the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended by the Civil Rights Act of 1991?**

- a. Discriminatory intent is required to establish liability.
- b. Damages available for plaintiffs to recover are capped based upon the number of employees an employer employs.
- c. Parties are entitled to a jury trial in certain circumstances.
- d. Employers may be subject to punitive damages.

**10. Which of the following best describes the purpose of affirmative action programs?**

- a. To ensure that minorities have an equal opportunity in competitive circumstances.
- b. To ensure that women succeed in business.
- c. To ensure that the most qualified candidate is chosen.

# Chapter 10: The Justice System

**Justice** is the moral force of righteousness in the judicial system. Justice has been touched on in previous chapters in many different contexts, this chapter will highlight the just distribution of rewards and punishments, look at restorative justice, see what deterrence means in ethics, evaluate how Jim Crow Laws affected society, and finally take a look at the civil rights movement and how it impacted the justice system as we know it today.

The formal principle of justice treats equal cases equally and cases that are not alike, unlike. This is the most fundamental principle of justice and has been widely accepted since it was first defined by Aristotle more than two thousand years ago. Universalizability describes the idea that actions should be judged similarly, unless they have morally relevant differences.

## A. Rewards and Punishments

Rewards	Punishments
Should be distributed equally <b>Does everyone deserve a reward?</b>	Must come <b>from the state</b> , not from individuals
Rewards should be given by effort <b>Is it fair to reward someone based on ability?</b> Sometimes people are naturally skilled	Must be imposed by someone with <b>recognized authority</b>
Rewards should mean something to be significant <b>Who needs the reward the most?</b>	Must adhere to the <b>laws related to that offense</b>

According to **Retributivism**, reward and punishment are direct reflections of an action. The size, scale, and severity of the reward or punishment is determined by the size, scale, or severity of the action

**Utilitarianism** states that rewards and punishments are created to ensure a future outcome, for example: Reward him for doing right, so that he'll feel good about himself and continue doing the right thing. He broke the law, he should be punished so that he won't commit more crimes

## B. Types of Justice

**Distributive justice** is concerned with society functioning effectively, engaging in efficient and effective production, keeping its members, and sustaining their well-being. Equal distribution is thought to give people a sense of true membership. It also creates the motivation to produce and to be rewarded for one's productivity. Distribution according to need also ensures that everyone's basic needs are met.

Just distribution can be determined by the rules followed in determining a distribution, or by the final outcome. A fair procedure might result in an unfair distribution, or a fair outcome could result from unjust procedures.

In *A Theory of Justice*, John Rawls stated that luck determines one's birthplace, social status, and family influences and should not unduly influence the amount of benefits we receive in life. He felt that the goal of distributive justice is to limit the influence of luck so that goods might be distributed in a way that is equally fair and to everyone's advantage.

Rawls had two main principles of justice: **The Liberty Principle** and the **Difference Principle**, which also contain the **Fair Opportunity Principle**. Rawls believed that his two principles would promote impartiality, meaning that special privilege would not be given to any party. He found the lack of impartiality a flaw in utilitarianism, claiming that utilitarian beliefs mistook impersonality for impartiality.

For others, distributive justice must be a matter of both process and outcome. They believe that in order for people to feel that they have received a fair outcome, the processes of distribution must be fair. In this way, distributive justice is related to concerns about procedural justice.

The **restorative theory** of punishment focuses on the victim's perspective. The goal is to return the victim to a state before the crime or alleviate some of the sufferings of the victim's family. Monetary payments, making amends, and expressing remorse are essential parts of the punishment process.

Restorative justice focuses on restitution, generally a payment or service rendered by the criminal to the victim or their family

If someone crashes their car into another person's house, as per retributive theorist, the criminal should be made to pay for their crime. For the restorative theorist the payments intend to make the victim whole again.

**Procedural justice** is concerned with making and implementing decisions according to fair processes, because fair procedures are the best guarantee for fair outcomes. People are more willing to accept outcomes they do not like if they feel the procedures used were respectful and dignified.

Procedures are deemed fair if:

1. There is an emphasis on consistency. Fair procedures should guarantee that like cases are treated alike.
2. Those carrying out the procedures are impartial and neutral. Those directly affected by the decisions should have a voice and representation in the process. This is especially important for weaker parties whose voices often go unheard.
3. The processes that are implemented are transparent. Decisions should be reached through open procedures, without secrecy or deception.

The theory of procedural justice is controversial, with a variety of views about what makes a procedure fair. These views tend to fall into three main categories:

1. The outcomes model regards the process as fair if the procedure produces correct outcomes.
2. The balancing model believes a fair procedure is one that reflects a fair balance between the costs of the procedure and the benefits that it produces.

3. The participation model contends a fair procedure is one that affords those who are affected an opportunity to participate in the making of the decision.

## C. Deterrence

The use of threat to discourage people from taking a certain action is called deterrence.

To some it raises some serious ethical concerns such as:

- No control for social and economic issues that encouraged crime
- Criticized for putting the world on edge during Cold War

In justice systems, **punishment** is used to prevent people from committing a crime.

**Military deterrence** is the use of extreme threat in order to prevent a military attack. It was popular during the Cold War between the USA and USSR. **Nuclear deterrent** is to discourage nuclear attack. The idea is, if you launch a missile at us, we'll launch every single missile we have at you

## D. Jim Crow Laws

Jim Crow laws were a set of laws and regulations in the South that enforced segregation from after the Civil War to the mid 1960s. "Jim Crow" was the racist stage persona adopted by white people performing in black face.

It was illegal for Black and white people to play cards, dominoes, or dice together. School integration was prohibited. All railroads were required to provide "separate but equal" accommodations for people of color and white passengers; this resulted in separate water fountains, bathrooms, and telephone booths. While the services were kept separate, they were almost never equal.

Jim Crow laws originated from the Black Codes that were introduced after the ratification of the 13th Amendment that abolished slavery

Black Codes continued throughout the Reconstruction Era. It was a southern phenomenon, but institutionalized racism persisted in the North as well. Through numerous acts and court rulings like Brown V. Board of Education, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act, and the Fair Housing Act, Jim Crow laws were dismantled



## E. The Civil Rights Movement

The American Civil Rights Movement focused on the rights of African Americans, took place in the mid-twentieth century. It dismantled the Jim Crow laws that made segregation legal.

Martin Luther King Jr. was the most famous civil rights leader who advocated non-violence and organized many protests.

It challenged discriminatory laws in a variety of contexts:

- Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white person and started a prolonged bus boycott
- The Freedom Riders helped to integrate the bus system by riding the buses and provoking violent resistance

Civil rights are rights that are extended to all citizens, regardless of their social group. For example:

- **Brown v. Board of Education:** The U.S. Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional to segregate schools based on race.
- **Age Discrimination Act of 1975:** It prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of age

Civil Rights Act of 1964:	Voting Rights Act of 1965
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect voting rights</li> <li>• Prohibit discrimination and segregation in public places</li> <li>• Prohibit discrimination based on trade school, education, employer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided more robust voting rights for people of color</li> </ul>

## F. Types of rights

Rights are classified as positive or negative and are generally exercised by the negation of action.

- **Positive rights** obligate others to act with respect to the right holder. Examples include the right to counsel, the right to police protection of person and property, the right to public education, as well as rights to food, housing, employment, Social Security, and health care.
- **Negative rights** forbid others from acting against the right holder. Examples include freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from slavery, the right to a fair trial, and the right to private property.
- **Natural rights** (also called moral rights or inalienable rights) are basic rights that are not contingent upon the laws, customs, or beliefs of society and that no government can deny. Unlike legal rights that are culturally and politically relative, natural rights are universal. The modern idea of natural rights grew out of the doctrines of natural law. John Locke theorized that individuals have natural rights, such as life, liberty, and property, which are independent of government and society. Locke was influential in the development of liberalism, which is the belief that political institutions are justified only if they promote human liberty.
- **Conventional rights** are rights that require human agreement. Since legal rights are created through human agreement, legal rights are an example of conventional rights. Legal rights are simply rights obtained by being covered by a particular legal system. All legal rights are

conventional, but not all conventional rights are legal.

- **Absolute rights** were theorized by Nozick. They are not merely prima facie rights that might be overridden, but boundaries not to be crossed without the free consent of the person whose rights they are. Absolute rights are rights that cannot be interfered with lawfully, no matter how important the public interest in doing so might be. Absolute rights grow from the concept of self-ownership; a person owns his or her own body, and that body's labor, and the fruits of that labor. Nozick posited that absolute rights justified libertarianism, anarchy, and the minimal state.

## G. Liberty

Four principles have been advanced as justifications for legal restrictions on the liberty of individuals:

**The harm principle** holds that individual liberty is justifiably limited to prevent harm to others. John Stuart Mill claims that only the harm principle can justify the limitation of liberty. This principle is the most widely accepted.

**The principle of legal paternalism** involves the state acting like a parent and forcing the citizen to behave in his/her own best interests by restricting individual liberty. Individual liberty is justifiably limited to prevent harm to self. In modern philosophy and law, it is described as an act for the good of another person without that person's consent, as parents do for children. At the expense of liberty, paternalists believe they can make better decisions than the people for whom they act. The principle of paternalism can arise in any situation where people hold power over others, such as parenting, education, and medicine. It seems most controversial in cases of criminal law, where the state seeks to protect a person's good by acting to protect the person from him/herself. The state does this coercively, often against a person's will. John Stuart Mill clearly rejects this principle as a basis for limiting liberty.

**The principle of legal moralism** involves laws prohibiting what is offensive to the majority of a community, or actions seen as destroying the fabric of a society. It states individual liberty is justifiably limited to prevent immoral behavior. Legal moralism is usually reserved for so-called victimless crimes. If there were victims, the harm or legal paternalist principles might apply. The opinion of the majority of the community is usually used to determine what is moral and immoral. John Stuart Mill rejects this liberty-limiting principle because it represents what he calls the "tyranny of the majority."

**The offense principle** believes individual liberty is justifiably limited to prevent offensive behaviors. It is based on three conditions:

1. The behavior must be significantly offensive to be limited.
2. The behavior must be offensive to almost everyone.
3. The offensive act should be limited if you have to go out of your way to avoid the act.

## Chapter 10: Quiz

**1. In distributive justice, the principle that concerns itself with outcomes and opportunities is:**

- a. Equality
- b. Fairness
- c. Free exchange
- d. Private property

**2. Which theory of justice is focused on punishments that will create the greatest benefit for all of society?**

- a. Desert island justice
- b. Retributive justice
- c. Restorative justice
- d. Utilitarian justice

**3. Which of these describes retributive punishment?**

- a. Punishment should be beneficial for society.
- b. Punishment should not exist.
- c. People are punished because they deserve to be punished.
- d. Punishment should focus on healing the victims.

**4. Who is the primary focus in restorative justice?**

- a. The court
- b. The criminal
- c. The victim
- d. The poor

**5. What is the purpose of Military deterrence ?**

- a. to prevent a military attack
- b. to rehabilitate criminals
- c. to make amends to victims
- d. to use of threat to discourage an action

**6. What is the purpose of punishment in terms of deterrence?**

- a. corporate world only
- b. dominant institutions
- c. United States military only
- d. To prevent people from committing a crime because they are afraid of the punishment

**7. After the Civil Rights Act of 1964, schools were forced to \_\_\_\_\_ .**

- a. desegregate
- b. discriminate
- c. segregate
- d. assimilate

**8. What do you call the unfair treatment of someone based on their race, sex, religion, or place of birth?**

- a. Negligence
- b. Segregation
- c. Discrimination
- d. Civil Rights

**9. What is the Convention on the Rights of the Child?**

- a. It is a treaty that recognizes the unique rights and issues children face.
- b. It is a treaty created to tackle poverty in third world countries.
- c. It is an annual convention/conference where child rights are discussed.
- d. Children may be subject to punitive damages.

**10. Which of the following statements is true of medical paternalism?**

- a. It gives the patient the knowledge to give informed consent.
- b. Sometimes paternalism is an appropriate course of action.
- c. It is always a negative concept.
- d. Medical paternalism is completely unacceptable.



# Chapter 11: Human Rights Ethics

Every person is entitled to basic fundamental rights as we call them **liberties** and **freedom** are known as **Human Rights**. We all are entitled to it simply because we are ‘human beings’ and these are critical to form and build a **moral society**. In today’s world the first step towards protecting human rights started with the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, created by the **United Nations** in 1948. It is the guiding principle and basis of all the human rights work.

*Examples of some of the human rights: Right to security from harm, Right to legal equality, Right to liberty, etc.*

## A. Human Rights and Moral Duties

Ethics and morals are an important part of our lives and societies but it is not always simple to do the right thing. This is where we follow some guidelines.

**Rights** are what we feel entitled to; be it human rights, political rights or other rights. We expect these rights but when it comes to our morals, it is more than just this.

What would you do if you saw an injured dog? Would you leave it as is or would you try to get it some help? The principle here is **moral duty**, the obligation to act based on ethical beliefs.

So we are talking about rights we all expect and there are moral duties we all have. **But is it your duty to uphold the right that you recognize?** Let me give you an example. Everyone is entitled to a fair trial. If you see someone is not getting one, would you take a personal risk and voice out or stand up?

That’s where the UN comes in as an international organization. It monitors and enforces human rights issues upon a moral duty to act. Nations that do not hold up to the human rights agreement that they signed with the UN could face actions like refusal of treaties, trade, etc. However, it is not easy for some nations to act, especially when it affects their people as they recognise the moral duty to avoid any action to protect their citizens.

## B. State Sovereignty

State sovereignty can create problems when the sovereign state violates human rights. So what is a sovereign state? A **sovereign state** has the recognized right to **manage its own internal affairs** meaning it has the authority to create its own laws, to operate its own judicial system, and to effectively govern itself.

The problem arises when human rights are violated like laws that discriminate based on ethnicity, race, etc. Enforcement becomes challenging considering it requires interfering with the internal affairs of a state, which adversely affects sovereignty.

So how do human rights activists monitor the violations or what does the international community do in order to manage an attempt to resolve a conflict?

## C. Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Post WWII in order to prevent massive war or genocide, an international peacekeeping organization known as the United Nations was formed in 1945.

In 1948, The United Nations drafted **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights** to define the ideas of human rights and fundamental freedoms irrespective of race, nationality, ethnicity, etc. It defined a moral obligation that all members of the United Nations are expected to stand by.

It consists of 30 articles describing the rights of all human beings. The declaration is **not a legally binding document but it has influenced other legal documents** particularly the **International Bill of Human Rights**, an official international treaty of human rights, contains the entire Declaration. The United Nations has developed nine core international human rights treaties that manage and enforce human rights across the world.

## D. Humanitarian Intervention

**Humanitarianism** is the concern with human welfare and the value of human life to improve the condition of humanity for altruistic, moral and emotional reasons.

Remember how we spoke about state sovereignty and the issues when a state violates human rights? **Humanitarian Intervention** is the answer in some of the cases. It is the process of intervening in the internal affairs of a state to stop the violation of human rights. The intention is to protect human rights and human lives that are in danger even though they are in a different country.

Such interventions can be military in nature. We have seen an army being sent in order to abolish a dictator of the region. In other cases that are non-military we have seen economic pressure like sanctions being imposed or political pressure being carried out. Though there are mixed reactions to humanitarian interventions the ultimate focus is to ensure that there is protection for the lives that are impacted due to the human rights violations.

## E. Ethical Issues in Humanitarian Intervention

If the purpose of humanitarian intervention is moral then what are the ethical concerns here? Even though the objective is ethically right as we want to protect human rights there are some things to consider.

1. **Sovereignty:** It can undermine a nation's sovereignty. Such foreign interventions could intervene with a nation's decisions which directly impacts their right to run itself.
2. **Disagreements:** Not everyone agrees on the definition of human rights. For example, some Islamic nations don't support the freedom of religion, while others do. While we all acknowledge that human rights exist there are differences in understanding and opinion.
3. **Colonialism:** Humanitarian intervention has been criticized as one form of colonization. Many believe that it inflates control of powerful states over others giving them even more economic & cultural power, thus making powerful nations even more powerful. *Example: US invasion of Iraq*

*that led to the abolition of Saddam Hussein as the dictator and also gaining access to the Middle Eastern oil fields.*

As much as we want to respect the sovereignty of all the nations there has to be a line that defines what is considered as a universal human right that is entitled to every human being irrespective of who they are and where they are and we obviously do not want abuse of human rights.

## Chapter 11: Quiz

### 1. What are human rights?

- a. is entitled to basic fundamental rights as we call them liberties and freedom
- b. rights that were created by humans, as opposed to natural rights
- c. the rights that can only be applied to humans, not animals
- d. The opposite of human wrongs

### 2. Who wrote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

- a. The United States
- b. Thomas Jefferson
- c. Yugoslavia
- d. The United Nations

### 3. What is state sovereignty?

- a. The power of states to make their own laws and to be free from federal interference in certain aspects
- b. The power to declare war
- c. The power to regulate commerce
- d. The separation of government into states and a federal government

### 4. What was influenced by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

- a. The International Bill of Human Rights
- b. The 9 core international human rights treaties recognized by the UN
- c. Most international treaties since 1948
- d. All of these were influenced by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### 5. Which international peacekeeping organization created the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

- a. The World Health Organization
- b. The United Nations
- c. The World Trade Organization
- d. The World Bank

### 6. What is the primary difference between the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Bill of Human Rights?

- a. The Bill is based on positive rights, while the Declaration is only based on natural rights.
- b. The Bill is concerned with four fundamental freedoms, while the Declaration is concerned with human rights.
- c. The Bill is a legal treaty, while the Declaration is not.
- d. These are two names for the exact same document.

**7. What is humanitarianism?**

- a. An active concern for human welfare.
- b. The belief in humans.
- c. Activism targeted towards the environment.
- d. A belief that your culture is superior to other cultures.

**8. Which of these is NOT an example of humanitarian intervention?**

- a. Military invasion to overthrow a dictator that abuses people's human rights.
- b. Using international organizations to bring humanitarian relief into another country.
- c. All of these are examples of humanitarian intervention.
- d. Applying heavy economic sanctions against nations that do not participate in the Olympics

**9. What is state sovereignty?**

- a. The power of states to make their own laws and to be free from federal interference in certain aspects
- b. The power to regulate commerce
- c. The separation of government into states and a federal government
- d. The power to declare war

**10. The settlement of a foreign territory is often referred to as which of the following?**

- a. Neo Imperialism
- b. Imperialism
- c. Neocolonialism
- d. Colonialism

# Chapter 12: Ethics in Relationships and Sexuality

## A. Dishonesty

Okay, let's begin with the question of lying. A true lie must have three features. It must communicate some information, be intentionally deceptive or misleading, and the liar must be aware that it is untrue. In general, lying is considered to be immoral. The philosopher Immanuel Kant once claimed that lying is always wrong, regardless of the circumstances. It is not always simple to determine whether lying is a moral action. If a lie protects someone from physical harm, it may be considered moral. If lying is better for your own safety and self-preservation, it may also be considered moral. Niccolo Machiavelli, an Italian Renaissance political writer, argued that lying could be justified if it ultimately served a moral purpose. In other words, the ends justify the means. If we maintain that lying is always immoral, that would preclude lying to protect people, as well as relatively innocuous lies like telling kids about Santa Claus.

## B. Breaking Promises

The implications of lying can also be extended to breaking promises. As with lying, breaking promises is generally seen as a moral violation. This is because promises create trust, and breaking them can hurt both the individual and society as a whole. Can breaking a promise be moral? Imagine that you are told that a dam holding a reservoir of water is about to break, but you are made to promise not to tell anyone. You could keep the promise and let the town get flooded, or break the promise and make sure everyone gets out safely. The idea of the greater good is always more important than the moral obligation between two individuals. There is no exception to this rule.

## C. Issues with Cheating

Cheating is considered to be immoral because it is an act of deception. By cheating, individuals are able to gain an unfair advantage over others. This unfair advantage can lead to serious consequences, such as getting a lower grade on a test, losing money in gambling, or breaking the law in business. Cheating is detrimental to social cohesion, trust, and therefore society as a whole. Furthermore, cheating gives some people an unfair advantage over others, which is an unjustifiable practice. However, what if some people already have an unfair advantage over others? You may have noticed that the world is not always fair. So, can cheating be moral if it balances out the playing field?

## D. Stealing and Cheating

There is a close link between cheating and stealing, in that both behaviors are often seen as being immoral. This is because both activities can weaken the bonds within a society. However, it is possible to argue that both cheating and stealing can be moral in certain situations. For this to be the case, a few conditions must be met. The structure of society can be seen as unfair or biased against certain groups of people. This was the case for the American colonists who rebelled against the British. When the colonists took weapons from the British or destroyed tea on ships, they were technically stealing.

However, they did so because the British colonial system limited their rights, which justified their otherwise immoral actions. Maybe we don't need this same justification today.

It is important to acknowledge that there are no clear-cut moral issues. Ethical debates surrounding topics such as lying, breaking promises, cheating, and stealing can be complex and nuanced. These behaviors are typically seen as immoral because they erode trust, damage social relationships, and violate the natural rights of others. Every action has the potential to be seen as moral, depending on the circumstances. In cases of self-preservation or the protection of others, the greater good may outweigh the moral relationship between two individuals.

## E. Relationships

Sexual relationships are not without their own set of moral duties and responsibilities to help maintain the relationship. Some of these moral duties include intimacy, fidelity, respect, pleasure, and procreation.

### Intimacy

Sexuality is a key part of what it means to be human. Philosophers have long debated the morality of sex, examining its importance and identifying its moral dimensions. What makes sex moral or immoral?

Different philosophies and religious ideologies have proposed many different answers to this question. Some argue that sex is only moral if it is within the bounds of marriage, while others contend that any consensual sex is moral. Some believe that sex is only moral if it is for the purpose of procreation, while others believe that any form of sexual pleasure is morally acceptable. There is no one answer that is universally agreed upon, but the debate continues to this day.

However, experts generally agree that sexuality is not only important but also a fundamental component of certain moral relationships. A sexual relationship is a special type of bond between two people who share a sexual connection. Intimacy is what defines a sexual relationship and refers to the close connection between two partners. This type of relationship requires both parties to be open and honest with each other in order to maintain a healthy sexual relationship. People are social creatures by nature and crave intimacy. Healthy sexual relationships are built on a foundation of trust and communication and provide profound emotional, spiritual, and physical intimacy. Thus, many philosophers consider intimacy to be a key moral obligation within a sexual relationship.

### Fidelity

Given that intimacy is the primary ethical purpose of a sexual relationship, sexual partners have a moral obligation to foster intimacy. Actions that promote intimacy are moral; those that damage it are immoral. There are a few key ethical principles that support intimacy in relationships. First is fidelity, which refers to faithfulness and loyalty between monogamous sexual partners. This means being supportive and reliable to your partner. Monogamous sexual partnerships rely on both partners being faithful to each

other. This faithfulness creates trust between the partners, which in turn leads to physical and emotional intimacy. Therefore, fidelity is considered to be a major moral obligation.

It is important to note that I am referring to more than just physical fidelity. Fidelity also encompasses emotional faithfulness - keeping promises, being honest and open, and avoiding deception. All of these actions contribute to fidelity and promote intimacy.

## **Respect**

Respect for one's monogamous sexual partner's autonomy is another important moral duty that comes with fidelity. Maintaining an intimate and moral sexual relationship requires recognition that both partners are individuals with unique wants and needs. Intimacy is about closeness and faithfulness, but part of preserving that intimacy is respecting each other's individuality. Intimacy in a relationship requires both parties to be intentional about making time for one another and being emotionally present. Without this investment, many relationships fall apart due to a lack of intimacy.

When discussing sexual relationships, it is important to respect your partner's autonomy by ensuring that consent is given freely and willingly. This means that both partners are in agreement and understand the implications of engaging in sexual activity. Engaging in sex without the full consent of each partner is a violation of autonomy and true intimacy.

It is crucial to remember that being in a relationship does not automatically mean that consent has been given. Consent must be given freely and willingly in all sexual relationships, regardless of how long the relationship has lasted.

## **Pleasure**

Now that we are all adults, it is important to acknowledge that sexual pleasure is a significant motivator for many people when engaging in sexual activity. However, this does not mean that sexual pleasure is the only important factor to consider when developing an ethical sexual relationship. Most scholars agree that pleasure is a critical part of developing and maintaining intimacy. So, sexual pleasure is a moral action.

We can look at this from the perspective of how pleasure releases chemicals in the brain that produce strong emotional responses, relieve stress and promote bonding.

We could explore this from the perspective of how pleasure can fulfill basic human desires and establish trust, empathy, and love.

Despite differing opinions, the outcome is still the same; sexual pleasure is essential to developing and preserving intimacy and should be treated as a moral obligation.



## Procreation

When discussing the moral duties within a sexual relationship, procreation must also be addressed. This is an area where different ethical theories have different ideas about what is morally acceptable. It has been argued by some that since having children is a natural consequence of a sexual relationship, it is morally incumbent upon these relationships to prioritize procreation. Basically, sex simply for the sake of pleasure, and without the intent to reproduce, is immoral. While this was a major feature of various ethical theories in the past, modern scholars generally do not share this viewpoint. The focus of moral duties in a sexual relationship has shifted over time from procreation to intimacy, reflecting a significant change in attitudes towards the role of sexuality in human society. Over time, the focus of moral duties within a sexual relationship has shifted from procreation to intimacy, representing a major change in attitudes about the role of sexuality in human society. However, one thing has remained constant: we still want sex to be moral, however we define it. All **sexual relationships** come with a set of ethical and moral obligations.

Although there is much debate on this topic, most scholars agree that one of the key moral duties in a healthy, consensual sexual relationship is to establish and maintain **intimacy**. Intimacy at its most basic is a very close connection. Intimate actions that promote trust and faithfulness are moral. Those that prevent or damage it are immoral. Many moral actions that support intimacy can be categorized under fidelity, or faithfulness. **Fidelity** creates trust and faithfulness integral to intimacy, so it is a moral obligation. **Respecting** your partner's **autonomy** is key to a healthy sexual relationship. This means valuing them as a rational individual who is capable of making their own decisions. In terms of a sexual relationship, this is largely embodied in the moral obligation to receive consent.

In many cultures and societies, sexual **pleasure** is seen as a key moral duty in intimate relationships. For many years, **procreation** was also seen as a moral duty within sexual relationships; however, this is no longer a widely held belief. No secret is needed for a moral sexual relationship; it is simply intimate.

## F. Sexuality

Human sexuality, the way we experience and express ourselves as sexual human beings, has private, public, and societal aspects. As sex is no longer seen as merely a means of procreation but one of intimacy, emotional connection, and sense of security, it is then a private affair. Our sexuality also defines who we are, which again, is a private process. There are, however, some aspects of our sexuality that are publicly seen. When we court, go on dates, and discuss our relationships with others, the public aspects are displayed. Society determines how we view sexuality and how much we keep private. It also shapes our sexual identities. Conservative cultures may shun all public displays of sexuality. Some cultures may prize virginity, condemn homosexuality, and revile those with multiple partners.

The traditional view on the morality of sex was that it was only morally right if it was between a married heterosexual couple. However, that is no longer a widely held belief. In this section we will explore the moral implications of sexuality, and examine the philosophers who have contributed to the debate around these topics. It's difficult to have an objective conversation about the rights and wrongs of sex because people's opinions will always seep through.

In this section we will look at moral principles surrounding sexuality and what some of the most famous moral philosophers of all time have to say on the sexuality subject. We will be looking at the opinions of Saint Thomas Aquinas, Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham, Marquis de Sade, and Susan Brownmiller.

We'll start with those who believe that sex is only moral between a married man and woman, Aquinas and Kant - traditional view of sexuality.

## Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas is one of the most famous defenders of traditional sexuality according to those who study morality and sexuality. As a 13th century philosopher, his views on sexuality have become widely known as the **natural law theory**. The natural law theory argues that sex is designed to be between a man and a woman. Biologically, the penis is designed to impregnate a woman, and the woman's anatomy is designed to accept this impregnation. Basically, God designed our sexual organs for procreating; therefore, any sexual activity that cannot result in procreation is considered immoral. Aquinas believed that sex is reserved for marriage partners only. In the end, the only way to be certain that a man's children are really his is to keep sex within the confines of marriage.

## Kant

Other well-known philosophers who subscribe to the traditional view of marriage include 18th century thinker Immanuel Kant. Kant believed that sex is only moral when a man and woman experience it together with mutual respect and devotion. One could argue that, since sexual desire is really about personal gratification, it is difficult to treat the object of one's sexual desire as anything but an object. Kant believes that marriage is the only way to mitigate the effects of sexuality's inborn selfishness. Kant believed that marriage is the only real hope for sex to be accompanied by real love and respect. "He was always very clear with me that he believed marriage was the only way to use one's sexuality. He said that if you commit to someone else, you're not just committing to them sexually, but emotionally and mentally too - the two can't be separated."

So, let's set aside our 'traditional view of sexuality' philosophers for a moment and turn to a couple of those who have a different perspective: Bentham and Marquis de Sade.

## Bentham

Jeremy Bentham was born in 1748. He was a famous British philosopher and social reformer who held the **utilitarian view of sexuality**, which was contrary to the mainstream opinions of his time. This view argues that any sexual act is moral if its benefits outweigh its drawbacks. In other words, a sexual act is moral as long as its positives outweigh its negatives. This means that you can't just generalize whether sexual acts are right or wrong; each situation needs to be evaluated based on its own merits. For example, does the risk of an unwanted pregnancy outweigh the benefits of premarital sex? Is the potential harm to a family caused by an extramarital affair worth the benefits? In other words, sexual morality is not always clear-cut. It depends on the specific situation.

As we move beyond the beliefs of Bentham and the thoughts of Aquinas and Kant, we come to the ideas of the Marquis de Sade.

## **Marquis de Sade**

Marquis, French philosopher born in 1740 famous for more than just his liberal views on sexuality but unfortunately also personal sexual exploits. In contrast to Aquinas' natural law theory of sexuality, de Sade believed that nature has given man the greatest possible assortment of sexual freedoms. In other words, de Sade believed that people should be free to express their sexuality however they see fit, without being constrained by laws or social norms. Despite what some may believe, there is no immorality in any form of sex, be it homosexual, adulterous, or premarital. As the late philosopher Alan Watts once said, "Nature places no great importance on fluid, which runs through our loins, and it is not concerned if we prefer to direct it down one path or another."

Let's now examine Susan Brownmiller's views on morality issues relating to sexual consent and sexual abuse within the context of marriage.

## **Susan Brownmiller**

Susan Brownmiller is a feminist journalist and activist who was born in 1935. She is best known for her pioneering book about rape, *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape*, which challenged the idea that sex between a married man and woman is always moral. Brownmiller's writing on marital rape was groundbreaking at the time, as the act was not widely considered immoral or criminal. This was due to the pervasive belief that a married woman 'belonged' to her husband and was in a perpetual state of consent. Brownmiller's argument that spousal rape is shockingly prevalent in male-female romantic relationships is deeply troubling. She links this prevalence to the common law rule of marital rape exemption, suggesting that patriarchy uses rape to control and dominate women. This is a disturbing and unacceptable state of affairs.

The work of Brownmiller has been instrumental in changing legal and social perspectives on marital rape, as well as helping to enact the first marital rape laws in the United States.

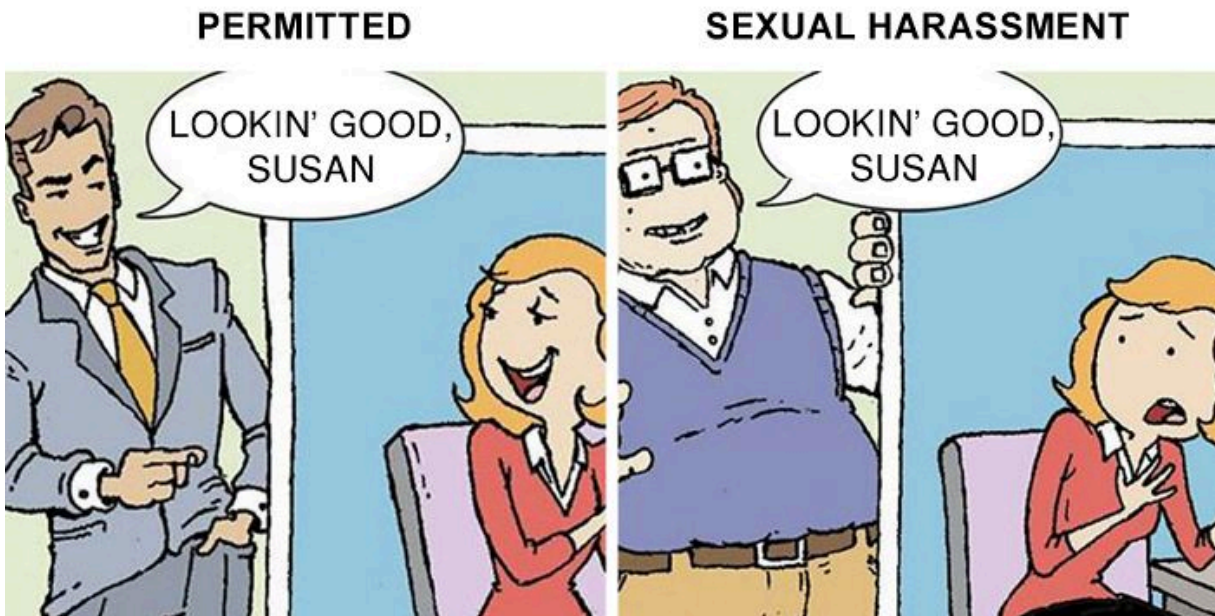
## **G. Ethical Implications of the Double Standard**

Double standards can have far-reaching ethical implications, especially when it comes to human rights. When two people in the same situation are held to different standards, it can create a sense of inequality and unfairness. This can often lead to legal challenges and weigh heavily on one's conscience.

### **Double Standards**

A double standard is a set of principles that two groups or people are held to that differ in some way. Double standards are usually unfair, and often result in one group having an advantage over the other. An example of a double standard would be if a teacher allowed all the boys in her class to bring candy for

lunch, but did not allow the girls to do the same. This would be an unfair advantage for the boys, as they would be able to have a treat during lunchtime that the girls would not.



The existence of double standards raises significant ethical concerns, such as the examples above.

## Human Rights

When it comes to the double standard, the most fundamental set of ethical concerns pertain to basic human rights. Since the end of WWII, human rights have become an increasingly active concern for the world, in part because of issues like the double standard. It is a fundamental right for all citizens to vote regardless of gender. It is unacceptable to discriminate against people based on religious beliefs or ethnicity. All people should be given equal treatment under the law, including paying taxes. There are many examples of double standards that have been used to enforce serious discrimination around the world. What really makes the people in each group different is prejudice - that is the only thing. The decision to give more rights or freedoms to one group over another is an arbitrary one. This is where the idea of human rights comes into play. The belief is that certain rights are applied to all people, and that these cannot be removed.

The existence of a double standard contradicts the belief that all people are deserving of equal rights. What are the basic rights that all people deserve?

After WWII, the United Nations set up a commission to answer the question of what rights every person in the world should have. In 1948, they published the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." This fundamental principle is violated when individuals or groups are treated

differently based on arbitrary criteria such as race, gender, or ethnicity. Such double standards not only violate basic human rights, but also undermine the unity and diversity of our societies.

## Law and Ethics

The question of human rights is a major ethical issue. However, the double standard can be ethically problematic in more ways than one. Another major issue is the law. Have you ever seen a statue of justice? The blindfolded lady in a toga holding scales and a sword is a symbol of justice. The fact that she is blindfolded means that the law should be applied equally to everyone, without favoritism. It is irrelevant whether someone is rich or poor, gay or straight, religious or atheist, male or female; the only thing that matters is that they are a human being.

Therefore, the double standard not only goes against our beliefs about human rights, but also contradicts the foundations of our modern legal system. There is a double standard in the way that the law treats different groups of people. Some groups are given more protection than others, which creates an unfair and unequal society. This is a serious issue that needs to be addressed by lawmakers in order to create a more just and equitable world. This has been an issue in the United States as well. Women didn't gain the right to vote until 1920, African Americans didn't gain true political rights until the 1960s, and gay marriage wasn't recognized until 2015. The double standard runs contrary to our beliefs as a society, whether it's a national issue or something happening in a single classroom. Now, doesn't that just highlight the problem?

## H. Rape

Philosopher Lois Pineau, wrote a feminist analysis of date rape in which she seeks to replace myths about female provocation and male self-control with a model of communicative sexuality. She claims in consensual sex, each partner tries to understand and promote the aims of the other. She argues that this basic understanding is not present in aggressive or coercive sex. According to Pineau, we should use a communicative model rather than a contract model for testing consent. In the contract model, if the person consented, there is no rape; however, the criteria for consent are varied, and the evidentiary standard for proving consent is low. Pineau's position is that, from a woman's point of view, communicative sex must be established to legitimize sex. Without communicative sex, the act is date rape. Pineau believes that the legal procedures for judging accusations of date rape are biased against the victim of the rape and argues that the process is biased because it makes faulty assumptions about the nature of sex, and the differences between the male and female sexuality. She is saying basically that the law implicitly assumes that women want to be raped and lead men on.

## I. Pornography

What is the difference between porn and art? As a basic human drive, sex can be used toward unethical ends. Some feminists contend that pornography exploits women and is a way of maintaining patriarchy. Immanuel Kant proposed that some sexual practices violate the basic ethical principle that we must never treat another person only as a means, but always as an end. Whether the material is pornography depends on its contextual feature. Not all sexually explicit material is pornographic.

What makes it pornographic is its implicit, or even explicit, approval of sexual behavior that is immoral, i.e., that physically or psychologically violates the personhood of the participants in such a way as to endorse degradation.

A well-developed definition of pornography comes from the feminist analysis of Helen Longino. She defined pornography as a verbal or pictorial explicit representation of sexual behavior that has, as a distinguishing characteristic, the degrading and demeaning portrayal of the role and status of the human female as a mere sexual object to be exploited and manipulated sexually.

Under this definition, pornography is one distinct type of sexually explicit material. However, it isn't the sexually explicit material that she opposes. Rather, it is the advancement of sexual behavior that physically or psychologically violates the personhood of one of the participants.

In the 1985 case *American Booksellers Association v. Hudnut*, a federal appeals court struck down the Indianapolis Anti-pornography Civil Rights Ordinance. Pornography, under the ordinance, was the graphic, sexually explicit subordination of women, whether in pictures or in words, that also included one or more of the following:

- Women presented as sexual objects who enjoy pain or humiliation
- Women presented as sexual objects who experience sexual pleasure in being raped
- Women presented as sexual objects tied up, cut up, mutilated, bruised, physically hurt, dismembered, truncated, fragmented or severed into body parts
- Women presented as being penetrated by objects or animals
- Women presented in scenarios of degradation, unjust, abasement, torture, shown as filthy or inferior, bleeding, bruised, or hurt in context that makes these conditions sexual
- Women presented as sexual objects for domination, conquest, violation, exploitation, possession, or use, or through postures or positions of servility or submission or display

The state statute provided that the use of men, children, or transgender people in the place of women also constituted pornography.

The court ruled that the ordinance violated the First Amendment because it was inconsistent with obscenity doctrine and constituted punishment of speech with a viewpoint. Therefore, prohibiting pornography is unconstitutional. Experts pointed to the *American Booksellers* case as evidence that U.S. courts, in determining obscenity, still focus on prurience and have refused to make violence or degradation elements of obscenity law.

## Chapter 12: Quiz

**1. Which of these is NOT a situation in which lying may be moral?**

- a. When it can give an individual a distinct advantage over others.
- b. When it is socially-accepted and based in good intentions, as in the case of telling children about Santa Claus.
- c. When lying is necessary for self-preservation.
- d. When lying once will result in a positive long-term outcome for society.

**2. What generally justifies both cheating and stealing?**

- a. Cheating and stealing are never morally justifiable.
- b. A desire to have an advantage over others.
- c. You cannot lie about it.
- d. The system must be inherently unfair so that these are the only ways to interact as equals.

**3. Which of these questions about sexuality is defined by social values?**

- a. Is sex before marriage acceptable?
- b. How do people dress in public?
- c. What defines different genders?
- d. All of these aspects of human sexuality are socially-defined.

**4. What is generally considered to be the primary moral duty/goal in a sexual relationship?**

- a. Self-satisfaction
- b. Procreation
- c. Intimacy
- d. Pleasure

**5. What basic values are promoted through fidelity and loyalty?**

- a. Trust
- b. Self-preservation
- c. Empathy
- d. Arrogance

**6. When someone is speaking, use good \_\_\_\_\_ to show that you are listening.**

- a. Language
- b. Posture
- c. Food choices
- d. Eye contact

**7. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, the source of all law is:**

- a. God
- b. The community
- c. Congress
- d. All humans

**8. Who believed nature has given man the greatest possible assortment of sexual freedoms?**

- a. Luther
- b. Augustine
- c. Marquis de Sade
- d. Kant

**9. What is the fundamental human right?**

- a. The right to your human rights
- b. The right to privacy
- c. The right to whatever you want
- d. The right to party

**10. Which idea is best described as the right to legal equality?**

- a. Hegemony
- b. Justice
- c. Liberty
- d. Democracy



# Chapter 13: Ethics in Healthcare

## A. Bioethics: Areas, Issues & Human Life

Bioethics is the study of the ethical implications of different practices in biology and medicine. It encompasses various areas, including medical research, patient care, and public health policy.

### Background, Areas, and Issues

The term 'bioethics' was first coined by Fritz Jahr in 1926. When scientific research was rapidly advancing, the events of World War I led many to reevaluate their ideas about progress.

The advancement of medicine and scientific research has been a contentious issue for many years. With the advent of computer technology, even more fields of scientific research are now possible, raising ethical concerns about how far we are willing to go in our quest for knowledge. Bioethicists typically disagree on the breadth of their field's focus, but, in general, this area of study is concerned with how scientific and medical research affects living organisms.

The ethical debate surrounding this issue is complex, but it can be boiled down to two main viewpoints.

The first issue to consider is the moral responsibility of scientists and researchers to respect life in all living things. This is a crucial issue when discussing things like animal testing

The other side of the argument is that researchers have a moral obligation to do whatever it takes to advance the healthcare of humans. In other words, we have the tools to help humanity. We have a moral obligation to do what is right, which is more important than the lives of a few rats.

As science and technology advance, so too do the ethical implications of these fields. Cloning, gene therapy, genetic engineering, and DNA manipulation are all now possible, but their morality is still very much in question. The question of balancing costs and benefits is still relevant, as is the question of whether or not humanity is meant to control such fundamental processes of life.

## B. Bioethics and Human Life

There are several key issues in the field of bioethics, but the ultimate goal is usually to protect human life. Biological and medical research is often geared toward finding ways to improve human health and longevity.

Weighing the benefits of medical research against the cost is important to consider when allocating resources.

Animals are often used in medical research to test new treatments and medicines before they are used on humans. Some people feel that is immoral, **as humans are responsible for protecting the world we live in.**

All medical treatments must be tested before they can be used on the general population. This is an undisputed fact among bioethicists. The question then becomes: should humans be used as the first test subjects, or would it be better to use animals instead? The bioethics community largely agrees that animal testing is acceptable, as long as the animals are not harmed and the tests are ultimately for the benefit of humans.

This viewpoint also acknowledges that sometimes sacrifices are necessary for the greater good. However, this is just one of many ethical issues to consider.

The same questions that apply to cloning and gene therapy also apply to other areas of bioethics, with the focus being on the potential benefits to human health and the risks to our own humanity. It is a fact that all issues must be eventually tested on actual humans to ensure accuracy.

One of the major focuses of bioethics is the **morality of human testing**. While bioethicists agree that it is necessary and moral to make sure that all treatments are tried and tested, there are numerous and very strict guidelines on how to do so. All tests involving human subjects, regardless of the discipline, must adhere to strict ethical guidelines.

Generally speaking, ethical values can be divided into six categories. **Autonomy refers to respecting a person's right to make their own decisions.** Beneficence is taking actions that are intended to benefit others. Justice implies treating people fairly. Non-maleficence is avoiding harming others.

Dignity is an important aspect of a person's self-worth. The sanctity of life is the belief that human life is always sacred. Researchers can help humanity while never crossing the line by following these six basic values.

The debate surrounding this issue often pits two main arguments against each other: that humans have a responsibility to treat the world and all living things with respect and that researchers have a responsibility to use their knowledge and tools to help humanity, regardless of other costs. Most mainstream viewpoints encourage research that serves humanity while still respecting all living organisms, understanding that some sacrifices may be necessary.

One of the other issues of importance in the field of bioethics is the ethical treatment of human research subjects. Research involving human subjects can only be conducted under strict moral guidelines. Generally, the research must comply with the **six cardinal values of autonomy, beneficence, justice, non-maleficence, human dignity, and sanctity of life.**

As long as you adhere to these moral guidelines, your research can be moral. If you stray from these guidelines, you risk becoming a mad scientist.

The philosophy of ethics is a key element of Western philosophy, with roots in ancient Greek philosophy. Medical ethics is a subcategory of ethics that focuses on the practical applications of ethical issues and topics related to medicine. It examines value judgments about treatment and care, and provides a framework for ethical decision-making in medical contexts.

Both medicine and psychology are fields of applied ethics, as both professions involve roles in treating and caring for other individuals and their well-being.

Ethics help to determine what is right and wrong within healthcare and can guide everything from professional etiquette to legal regulations. In order to provide the best possible care, healthcare and ethics must go hand-in-hand. Healthcare professionals regularly face ethical dilemmas that can have life-or-death consequences.

## Resource Allocation

The primary issue that resource allocation addresses is how to divide patients' resources. However, resource allocation is not restricted to individual patient care and can occur at the macro or micro level.

**Macro-allocation** in healthcare refers to broad societal issues such as government healthcare systems and funding, while micro-allocation refers to individual treatment and care. **Ethics studies how resources are allocated.**

Utility, or the Greatest Happiness Principle, holds that actions are right if they promote happiness or pleasure and wrong if they produce unhappiness or pain. This ethical theory was first proposed by Jeremy Bentham (1748 - 1832) and later expanded upon by John Stuart Mill. (1806 - 1873) **Utilitarianism is a doctrine that emphasizes the principle of utility, which can be used to determine the benefits of distributing people.**

The ethical considerations of modern medicine, such as universal healthcare and healthcare affordability, take into account both medical and social utility to create policies at both the macro and micro levels.

The **COVID-19** pandemic has had a major impact on resource allocation at both the micro and macro levels, as rationing has limited the availability of resources.

Ethical considerations were present at every stage, from triage (deciding which patients get beds and respirators) to emergency government funding (allocating money for vaccines and medical supplies).

**If ethical issues are not addressed properly, it could lead to price gouging, misappropriation of funds, malpractice, and even injustice.**

## Behavior Control

Ethical issues about modern medicine are also being discussed within psychology, specifically regarding behavior control. Behavior control in psychology involves altering or directing behavior through therapeutic means or medication.

The debate surrounding ethical behavior control usually distinguishes between behaviors caused by medical conditions and those simply outside social norms.

Differentiating between someone that is different and someone that requires behavior control techniques or medications is an ethical consideration. Ignoring ethics could lead to unnecessary or harmful consequences for an individual.

One way to approach behavior control ethically is through deontological ethics. Deontology is a duty-based ethical system that believes right and wrong are intrinsic. This means that ethical actions do not depend on the situation.

***Kantian ethics is a deontological approach established by the Enlightenment thinker Immanuel Kant. Kant (1724 - 1804)***

Kant's ethical theory is based on two key concepts: the Categorical Imperative and the Formula of the End in Itself. His Categorical Imperative stipulates that morality is a result of reason, and individuals are bound by ethical principles and universal law without exception. In other words, **actions are always principled, universal, and unconditional.**

In addition, the Formula of the End in Itself is a universal principle that dictates that all beings have intrinsic value and should be treated as an end, not a means to an end. Using someone's behavior as a means to an end would be unethical.

*For example, homosexuality was traditionally treated as a mental condition, so behavior control measures would be used on someone that is homosexual as a means to possibly appease or benefit a family or society but not the person as an end.*

The Categorical Imperative is a philosophical concept that states that actions should be principled, universal, and unconditional.

If that is the case, then all sexualities should be treated as mental conditions and go through behavior control in order to appease society, even if it is at the expense of each individual person. As a result, there are no exceptions, and all actions should be taken with others in mind, just as individuals would want others to do unto them.

## **Genetics**

Biomedical ethical issues are an important part of scientific research. Theoretically, genetics research could discover new ways to treat severe conditions, even eliminate diseases from a DNA sequence and predetermine every physical trait of a child before birth. As we move into the twenty-first century, ethical debates about genetics are becoming more prevalent as technology and scientific advances allow us to manipulate them.

Despite significant advances in research and technology, stem cell research remains a controversial issue due to ethical concerns surrounding abortion. Stem cell research and application are hotly debated topics in genetics, as the potential scientific benefits must be weighed against ethical concerns.

There is some debate over whether or not using stem cells from embryos is unnatural and if it diminishes the value of human life. On the other hand, others make a utilitarian argument that claims stem cell research, which involves destroying embryonic tissue, benefits society as a whole for the greater good and the greatest number.

This means that there are significant debates surrounding stem cell research centered on whether the potential cures for degenerative diseases justify the destruction of human embryos.

Other debates surrounding embryos involve assisted reproductive technology. Assisted reproductive technology has helped millions of couples dealing with infertility but has also raised countless ethical issues. Some questions surround the care and safety of the embryos in the lab and the number of embryos to transfer. Multiple births (from the transfer of more than one embryo) increases risks of mother and infant morbidity and mortality. Is the goal of pregnancy and a live birth worth the medical and moral risks? Selective reduction (reducing the number of fetuses in a multiple pregnancy also poses its own challenges. Selective reduction maximizes both the mother's and surviving neonates' health. However, it could lead to the loss of the entire pregnancy. Is it morally acceptable to abort these fetuses regardless of the circumstances? After undergoing IVF, there are typically some embryos remaining. What should happen to these embryos? Should they be stored for future cycles and how should they be stored? What should happen if there are no future cycles? Should they be donated to stem cell research or to other couples?

## Human Experimentation

Ethics are an important consideration in medical research. The use of human subjects in scientific experiments raises ethical concerns that must be addressed. Individuals who are vulnerable due to psychological or medical conditions could be taken advantage of directly or indirectly.

### EXAMPLE:

*The prescription drug industry is a billion-dollar industry. Drug production may skip steps to experiment with underdeveloped drugs, which can have severe side effects.*

Child psychology experiments can have a long-term impact on children, so ethical committees and considerations have been developed to protect children from being exploited. A key consideration for conducting human research is obtaining informed consent from participants. This means that individuals must be made aware of the risks and benefits of participating in a study before they can provide their voluntary agreement to do so.

## C. Importance of Ethics in Healthcare

There is a general consensus among many that a society is largely judged by how it treats its most vulnerable members. Furthermore, as humans, we tend to value human life, expectancy, and quality of life quite highly, meaning that ethical practices in healthcare are important in order to protect and maintain those values.

Ethics provide a framework for determining right and wrong behavior in healthcare and society more broadly. They help us to identify good and bad actions and make decisions accordingly.

The values that society holds dear are reflected in healthcare practices, policies, and procedures. As such, the ethical framework within healthcare should be in line with societal norms and values regarding what is right and wrong and the sanctity of human life.

Ethics in healthcare is complex and interconnected with many aspects of society, including politics, economics, technology, and law. On a more personal level, ethics in healthcare demonstrates how individuals ought to be treated.

### Examples of Ethical Issues in Healthcare

There is a growing body of evidence highlighting ethical issues in healthcare. These could include **debates about whether healthcare is a right or a privilege or whether quality healthcare is a right or a privilege.**

The efficacy of human genetics and alterations is also debated in medical ethical discussions about genetics. Some argue that human breeding is an eventuality.

**Aldous Huxley's Brave New World** is a work of science fiction that presents a world in which humans are bred into classes, which is increasingly possible. Other contemporary examples of abortion debates include discussions surrounding access to abortion and a move toward criminalizing abortion not only for healthcare practitioners but possibly anyone remotely associated with the abortion process. When discussing the human mind or body, it is important to consider ethical implications.

In short, ethics, or moral philosophy, is the study of right and wrong behavior. Furthermore, **medical ethics**, a subcategory of ethics, study practical applications of ethical issues and topics related to medicine, examining value judgments about treatment and care.

The main concern that **resource allocation** addresses is how to equitably distribute patients' resources. Utility is the guiding principle of utilitarianism, which assesses the relative benefits of **resource allocation**. This philosophical approach to ethics seeks to promote the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

The field of psychology typically views **behavior control** as either the conditioning or directing of behavior through therapy or medication. However, there is much debate surrounding the ethicality of behavior control, particularly when it comes to distinguishing between behaviors caused by medical conditions and those that are simply outside of social norms.

- **Kantian ethics** holds that morality is derived from reason, and individuals are subject to ethical principles and universal law without exception. The principle of the ends-in-itself is a universal law that dictates that all beings have intrinsic value and should be treated as an end in themselves and never as a means to an end.
- **Genetics** research holds the promise of discovering new ways to treat severe conditions and, potentially, eliminating diseases from a DNA sequence. Additionally, this research could enable us to predetermine every physical trait of a child before birth. However, proponents of stem cell research argue that it could be used to cure degenerative diseases. This often involves destroying human embryos.
- **Human experimentation** is the use of human subjects to test scientific research and its effects. A key guideline for human testing is that subjects must be fully aware of risks and provide **conscious consent**. Ethics guide our actions in healthcare and society, determining what is right and wrong or what is good and bad.

## D. Medical Rights and Obligations

Medical practices are based on moral and ethical principles that promote optimal healthcare outcomes. Paternalism, radical individualism, and reciprocity are important concepts in medicine that protect patient rights and uphold medical ethics.

### Medicine and Ethics

As children, we were often afraid to go to the doctor's office. Even as adults, many of us are afraid of the doctor's office. I mean, come on, nobody likes getting shots. As a child, you were likely given a lollipop after a visit to the doctor. However, candy is not typically given to adults for their bravery in visiting the doctor. This is because the medical profession has strict ethical guidelines in place. It is helpful to know that both patients and healthcare professionals are being considered in this matter.

When working in medicine, you are constantly dealing with human lives and the decisions you make can have a significant impact. Healthcare professionals are guaranteed certain ethical rights, which they can exercise without being morally questioned. However, they also have moral obligations, which they must uphold in order to behave ethically. Have confidence that lollipops are intended to be included on that list.

## Paternalism in Medicine

When determining the rights and obligations of healthcare professionals, there have been three general perspectives: paternalism, beneficence, and autonomy. **Paternalism** states that the healthcare professional has the knowledge and expertise to make medical decisions in the best interest of the patient. beneficence suggests that healthcare professionals have a duty to act in the best interest of the patient. autonomy posits that patients have the right to make their own decisions about their care.

It is not the patient's prerogative to choose whether or not they want a specific procedure; rather, it is the doctor's discretion. Why? Because the doctor has more expertise and experience than the patient. This type of authority figure is known as a paternal figure, and this relationship is beneficial because the patient can receive guidance and care. The doctor may inform the patient that a certain medication or procedure is necessary, and the patient's feelings on the matter are not relevant. However, this does not mean that a doctor can do whatever they want. They have the responsibility to always do what is in the patient's best interest; otherwise, they have failed in their duties as knowledgeable professionals.

## Radical Individualism in Medicine

Paternalism was once a common ethical belief. After all, doctors are highly trained and knowledgeable in ways that patients are not. However, this newfound freedom for doctors coincided with 19th-century ideas like social Darwinism, eugenics, and institutional racism, which made many people uncomfortable. To put it mildly, paternalism in medicine became unpopular in the 20th century because doctors believed that some people were ethnically or socially superior. This had dangerous implications for medicine, so paternalism was no longer seen as a good way to practice medicine.

The **radical individualism** belief holds that patients have absolute rights over their bodies, as opposed to the paternalism viewpoint. Informed consent is a requirement in the modern medical world that patients must be made aware of the risks and benefits of any and every procedure. This means that doctors cannot take your temperature without your permission. Radical individualism is founded on the belief that every person has the right to make their own decisions about their life and wellbeing. This includes the right to refuse medical treatment, even if it may result in death. Doctors have a professional and ethical obligation to respect the choices made by their patients, even if they disagree with them. **(Informed consent )**

## Reciprocity in Medicine

Paternalism and radical individualism are both extreme viewpoints. There has to be a middle ground, right? Well, yes. **Reciprocity** is the belief that healthcare professionals, patients, and their families should all work together to develop the best treatment plan. From this perspective, the doctor-patient relationship is that of teammates, not a parent-child one. In a healthy and functional relationship, both parties are respectful of each other's needs, wants, and areas of expertise. The doctor must still adhere to the patients' wishes but is also able to carry out their duties more effectively as a medical professional. The level of power each person has in this relationship may vary, as it is typically based on agreements between the doctor and patient - either formal or informal. The doctor is usually considered



the authority figure amongst equals due to their medical expertise. While patients must give consent before treatment can begin, doctors' opinions are usually respected.

In this chapter, we learned that ethical issues are commonplace in the world of healthcare. After all, healthcare professionals are dealing with human lives. There are three main historical perspectives on healthcare professionals' rights and obligations regarding ethical issues.

The first one is **paternalism** is the belief that the doctor knows what is in the patient's best interest. This is essentially a parent-child relationship, where the doctor can make decisions regardless of patient concerns.

Radical individualism, in which the patient has complete and absolute control over their bodies, is the opposite of collectivism. This idea led to ideas like **informed consent**, which requires doctors to discuss treatments with their patients and get the patient's permission. It could also limit the ability of doctors to carry out their duties effectively. Ultimately, we want to establish a **reciprocal relationship** between doctors and patients in order to create the best treatment options. This relationship fosters a cooperative attitude while allowing the patient to retain control over their fate and permitting the doctors to do their job.

## E. Importance of Truth Telling, Confidentiality, and Informed Consent in Medicine

### Ethics in the Medical Field

The importance of ethics in the medical field cannot be overstated. Maintaining a good doctor-patient relationship is essential to providing quality healthcare. Healthcare providers have a legal and ethical responsibility to ensure that their patients provide informed consent and that their privacy and confidentiality are protected.

The promotion of confidentiality, privacy, and truthfulness in the doctor-patient relationship by these ethical standards helps to build a strong foundation for accountability and effective treatment in the medical field.

### Truthfulness & Ethical Value

#### Truth-telling

Truth-telling in the medical field refers to the ethical obligation of healthcare professionals to disclose accurate information to patients about their health conditions and diagnosis. This must be done in a way that does not cause harm to the patient.

Truthfulness is an important ethical value for physicians because it builds trust and shows respect for patients. In modern medicine, there is a general policy that physicians have a moral duty to be truthful about conditions and treatments.

In some cases, it may not be possible, to tell the truth, due to the potential for causing harm to the patient. In other cases, the patient may not want to know all the details.

## Exceptions to Truth-telling

Therapeutic privilege is a moral right that allows healthcare providers to withhold certain information from patients if it is deemed to be in the patient's best interest. This exception to truth-telling is based on the premise that some information could potentially do more harm than good if revealed to a patient. An example of the therapeutic privilege will be if a patient has expressed suicidal ideations to their healthcare provider. In this case, the provider may choose to withhold this information from the patient in order to prevent them from causing harm to themselves.

If the physician believes that being completely honest with the patient could lead to suicide, they may withhold information they feel could be harmful if disclosed.

However, while therapeutic privilege can be an exception to truth-telling, it is also a controversial matter. Some feel that truth-telling takes precedence over therapeutic privilege, while others believe that the therapeutic relationship should take precedence. The scientific literature supports the use of therapeutic privilege, and this has been recognized by several courts. There have been arguments and court findings, however, that the patient's right to be informed of the truth takes precedence over the physician's discretion to exercise the therapeutic privilege.

There are situations where physicians are exempt from being completely truthful with patients. For instance, some patients want to maintain a positive outlook on their health or believe in a faith-based approach to well-being.

## Confidentiality

Maintaining confidentiality is another key obligation for medical professionals. Confidentiality refers to keeping a patient's personal health information secure and private unless the patient provides consent to release the information. This is an important element of providing quality patient care.

The confidentiality of patient information is a critical element of the doctor-patient relationship that helps to ensure positive patient outcomes. If confidentiality were not protected, patients might be reticent to share sensitive information, which could then negatively impact patient care.

A perfect example of this would be that a patient may feel hesitant to admit to illegal drug use because it could have legal implications. However, if the patient feels that the information will remain confidential and trusts the physician, they may be more inclined to disclose this.

The physician can use this information to determine the most effective treatment and achieve the best possible outcome for the patient. However, there are exceptions when confidentiality may be broken.

One reason a physician may choose to break confidentiality is if the patient reveals information indicating that another person or group of people are in serious danger of being harmed. In this case, the physician may believe that revealing this information could help prevent harm from occurring.

An example of this would be if a patient were to express homicidal ideation about a specific individual. In this case, the physician may need to break confidentiality in order to disclose this information to the police or another necessary party, in order to prevent any potential harm to the individual in question.

If a patient has a communicable or infectious disease that needs to be tracked for public safety, confidentiality can be broken.

In the US, states have laws requiring the reporting of certain communicable or infectious diseases, such as COVID-19, Aids, tuberculosis, STDs, and rabies, to public health authorities.

When a patient is diagnosed with a communicable disease, it is the physician's duty to report this information to public health officials so that the spread of the disease can be monitored and prevented. In such cases, the need to protect public health takes precedence over patient confidentiality.

## **Informed Consent**

It is important to adhere to the ethical principle of informed consent in the medical field. This means that patients should be made fully aware of all treatment options (including side effects and expected results), risks, and benefits before making a final decision. It is the moral obligation of physicians to ensure that patients have all the information they need to make an informed decision. In this case, the physician must seek the patient's permission to continue.

Informed consent is a process in which patients are given information about their treatment options and then allowed to choose which option they would like to pursue. Informed consent relies on both truthful information and confidentiality in order to be effective.

The physician's role in truth-telling is important when informing the patient of treatment options. By being honest and providing all the relevant information, the patient can make an informed decision about their treatment and achieve the best possible outcome.

Confidentiality is important when patients are discussing their options with their physician. If patients trust their physicians and know that their information will remain confidential, they will be more likely to share sensitive information with their physicians during these discussions. This also contributes to a more favorable patient outcome.

One exception to the rule of consent is emergencies due to the fact that the patient cannot participate in decision-making. Especially when no surrogate is available to act on behalf of the patient.

When this happens, the physician can act on behalf of and make decisions for the patient.

So, what have we learned? Ethics are essential to the medical field as they foster positive doctor-patient relationships and lead to improved patient outcomes and accountability in the medical profession.

There are three key ethical principles in medicine: truth-telling, beneficence, and autonomy. Truth-telling is the moral duty of physicians to be completely truthful about conditions and treatments with patients. The general policy in modern medicine is that beneficence, or the duty to do good, requires physicians to provide patients with information about the potential risks and benefits of treatments. Autonomy, or the respect for patients' rights to make decisions about their own care, requires that physicians respect patients' decisions about whether or not to receive treatment.

There are two situations where a physician may be exempt from being completely truthful with patients, although these situations are controversial.

One is when a physician believes that providing a patient with complete honesty could lead to greater harm, they may withhold some information.

This ethical right is known as therapeutic privilege.

Secondly, the principle of confidentiality is important when working with patients, as it allows them to feel comfortable sharing sensitive information. This principle is violated when a patient is forced to share information that they have not consented to or when they are not given the opportunity to choose what information they would like to share.

The protection of a patient's personal health information is a cornerstone of medical ethics. Confidentiality refers to the duty of health care providers to keep patients' information private and secure unless the patient gives explicit permission for the information to be shared.

There are, however, circumstances where breaking confidentiality may be warranted. For example, if a patient reveals information indicating that another person is at risk of harm or if the patient has a communicable or infectious disease that needs to be monitored for public safety purposes.

It is also important to adhere to the third ethical principle of informed consent. Informed consent means that the physician has a moral obligation to ensure that the patient is fully aware of all treatment options (including side effects and expected results), risks, and benefits before allowing the patient to make a final decision.

In this case, the physician must seek the patient's consent to continue.

## Chapter 13: Quiz

### 1. Why is genetic evidence useful in understanding human evolution?

- a. Genetic evidence helps us understand our relationship to other species.
- b. Genetics can help to explain how human beings came to have the biological qualities they possess.
- c. Studying genetics provides us with information about what processes were involved in evolution.
- d. All of the answers are correct.

### 2. Which of the following best describes how human behavior is affected by genes?

- a. Genes interact with the environment, and the environment interacts with genes, to influence human behavior.
- b. Genes determine how a person will evolve during their lifetime, such as which career they will choose.
- c. Genes determine exactly how a person will behave, such as whether a particular person will be aggressive.
- d. Genetic evidence shows that each race has both positive and negative qualities.

### 3. Why does the World State in Brave New World support soma?

- a. It makes money.
- b. It makes people happy and stable.
- c. It doesn't support soma.
- d. It blinds people to the truth.

### 4. What is the most important ethical guideline for human testing?

- a. The subject must be fully aware of the risks and give conscious consent.
- b. The subject must not know what the test is about and should be as expendable as possible.
- c. Human testing has no guidelines and is never acceptable.
- d. Human testing has no guidelines since it is always necessary.

### 5. Which of these is theoretically possible with genetics research?

- a. Discovering new ways to treat severe conditions
- b. Pre-determining every physical trait that a child will have before they are born
- c. Eliminating disease from a DNA sequence before a child is born
- d. All of these are possible.

### 6. What is the general policy in modern medicine about truth telling?

- a. Physicians have a moral duty to be completely truthful about conditions and treatments.
- b. It is impossible to anticipate every outcome, so always communicate the worst-case scenario first.
- c. Assume that most patients do not want to know the full truth.
- d. Physicians only need to be completely truthful about the treatment options they think will work best.

**7. Where is the line usually drawn in ethical debates on behavioral control?**

- a. Between behaviors caused by medical conditions and those that are just outside social norms
- b. Between behaviors in adults and those in children
- c. Between behaviors that are good and those that are bad
- d. Between conscious and unconscious behavior

**8. Which of the following is a major ethical problem with medical paternalism?**

- a. It leads to medical malpractice.
- b. It leads to increased patient treatment compliance.
- c. It increases the cost of healthcare for the patients and insurance companies.
- d. It removes the patient's ability to make decisions regarding their body.

**9. Which of these is not an acceptable reason to break confidentiality?**

- a. All of these are acceptable reasons to break confidentiality.
- b. Damages available for plaintiffs to recover are capped based upon the number of employees an employer employs.
- c. If the patient has been involved in illegal activity, such as using illicit drugs.
- d. If the patient contract a communicable or sexually transmitted disease that must be tracked for public safety.

**10. Informed Consent provides participants with sufficiently detailed information on the \_\_\_\_\_, so they can make an informed, voluntary, and rational decision on whether or not to participate.**

- a. Researcher
- b. Study
- c. Purpose
- d. Proposal

# Chapter 14: Ethics in the Environment

Environmental Ethics describes the relationship between human values and the environment. This includes the consideration of non-human species and the impacts human activities have on the environment as a whole. Within this framework are two overarching viewpoints from the **Anthropocentric** ethicists and the **Ecocentric** ethicists that both ask a single, fundamental question: “What obligations do we have concerning the natural environment?”

Anthropocentric ethicists take a **human-centered** approach, and believe that human interests should be considered before those of the natural world. Ecocentric ethicists find **intrinsic value** in nature's existence, believing we are interconnected with the natural world and thus have an obligation to protect it and form a more balanced relationship.

Both positions tend to reach the same conclusion but for different reasons. For example, both would want to protect a marine habitat, but Anthropocentric ethicists would do so to preserve human access to resources such as fish or oil, claiming that its destruction would harm humanity's future. Ecocentric ethicists would want this habitat to remain pristine for its own sake, arguing that it has inherent value and should be respected as such, not purely for what it can give humanity.

## A. Human Values

Human values are the beliefs and thoughts that shape our actions and how we perceive the world around us. As we have become more aware of our impact on the natural world, so too has **Environmentalism** become a more important, and politically charged, issue. Most people understand that the wholesale destruction of the environment would have dire consequences for a variety of reasons, but they also understand they need resources and land to survive. As with many ethical debates, people will tend to fall somewhere along the **spectrum** on the issue, attempting to find an approach that upholds their values and how they view the environment but often encountering situations that make taking firm stances one way or the other difficult.

## B. Issues

The academic and philosophical consideration of environmental ethics can help us navigate incredibly difficult **ecological and societal problems**. Even though anthropocentric and ecocentric ethicists are striving for similar goals, the **motivation** behind their actions and how they go about implementing them can lead to disruptive arguments and political friction. Though everyone can agree that they do not want to live in a world full of carcinogenic rain and toxic fumes with no animals or greenery, how to enact the correct policies to benefit both humanity and the environment is not a simple task.

The issue can become especially problematic when certain anthropocentric ethicists, for example, bring **economic considerations** into the mix. Rather than taking a more balanced approach, people in this camp of thinkers might choose profit for the few over the benefit of the many and cause further issues. When considering that many anthropocentric ethicists reject a profit-driven approach as part of their ethic in the first place, it can become difficult to reach a beneficial agreement.

Issues that ethicists consider are varied and numerous, and they may include:

- Air, water, and land pollution
- Energy production and consumption
- Fossil fuel mining and gas fracking
- Global climate change
- Habitat loss
- Overfishing and overfarming
- Population growth
- Water rights and quality
- Wilderness and endangered species preservation

Here are two examples of America’s most famous environmental ethics problems:

### Love Canal

Love Canal was used as a dumpsite for an excess of over 20,000 tons of toxic chemicals. The Hooker Chemical Company managed the landfill improperly by simply covering the canal with dirt and then going on to sell it for only one dollar. A school and over 800 homes were built on the contaminated land. Health problems were rampant among the people living in Love Canal, from a high number of miscarriages and birth defects, to shortened life expectancy and cancer. Lois Gibbs created the Love Canal Homeowners Association after noticing that her friends and neighbors were becoming ill. Though the company denied any responsibility for health problems caused by their illegal dumping, 833 Love Canal households were relocated to a safer area with government help and the Hooker Chemical Company was, eventually, successfully sued. Gibbs’ efforts were instrumental in the passing of the **Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA)**.

### Dust Bowl

In the 1930s, the Southern Plains of the United States experienced one of the worst droughts on record. 60 years prior, the **Homesteading Act of 1862** allowed families to claim 160 acres of publicly-held land across the US as private property which, unfortunately, exacerbated the effects of the extreme drought. Many of the families who settled in the area were not from agricultural backgrounds and, as a result, employed many unsustainable farming practices. This led to nutrient-depleted soil throughout the area. The land was over-plowed, which removed the dust and erosion protection that native grasses provided. Adding to this, the lasting effects of World War I led to higher food prices, which encouraged farmers to cultivate more land that was previously thought to be unsuitable for farming. After years of deficient farming practices, over 35,000,000 acres of land became agriculturally unusable. This environmental disaster caused massive dust storms and led to dwindling resources, which resulted in many families fleeing the area. The economic impacts of this disaster lasted well into the 1950s.

## C. Life-Centered Environmental Ethics

**Ecocentric** ethics, also called **Life-Centered** ethics or **Biocentrism**, purport the concept of “**deep ecology**”, an ethical theory put forward by twentieth-century philosopher and naturalist **Arne Naess**. The argument states that human beings are interconnected with the natural ecology of life on Earth and



that we as a species and society need to undertake a significant change of moral, philosophical, and political perspectives to prevent imminent ecological disaster. This ethical framework also criticizes the unsustainability of the economic ideal of "infinite growth" and is also critical of capitalism and modern technological advances that have endangered ecosystems and animal habitats.

The **Deep Ecology** movement puts forward eight core points for consideration:

1. The value of life is not contingent upon its usefulness to humans.
2. The richness and diversity of life contribute to its well-being and have value in themselves.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs in a responsible way.
4. The human impact on the world is excessive and rapidly getting worse.
5. Human lifestyles and population are the primary elements of this impact.
6. The successful coexistence of diverse cultures and life forms requires reduced human impact.
7. The basic structures of ideology, politics, economics, and technology must change in order to prioritize the quality of life over an ever-increasing standard of living.
8. Those who accept the foregoing points have a responsibility to participate in implementing the necessary changes and to do so peacefully and democratically.

This school of thought also considers the role of **sentience** in animals, which includes the ability to feel or perceive subjectively. Animal rights activists argue that all animals are sentient in that they can feel pleasure and pain and also have inherent worth outside of their use as a resource for humans. This, in turn, entails the presumption of certain moral rights and ought to entail certain legal rights.

The life-centered school of environmental ethics believes that all living things and environments have **intrinsic worth** and must be respected for their own sake. It is thus our moral obligation to protect and preserve nature, for it is innately valuable, rather than solely valuable to us.

Paul Taylor described the three fundamental points of biocentrism in his book *Respect for Nature*. His arguments are integral to the philosophy of deep ecology.

1. Humans must not harm any part of nature that had an intrinsic value (**nonmaleficence**).
2. Humans should not try to control or change ecosystems (**non-interference**).
3. Humans should respect and protect animals and remain faithful to the trust between humans and animals (**fidelity**).

When applied, these ideas oppose hunting and fishing, and would call for **vegetarianism**. Taylor diverges from some environmentalists by not placing value on non-living objects in nature.

## D. Human-Centered Environmental Ethics

**Anthropocentrism**, also called **Human-Centered environmental ethics** or **Ethical Humanism**, argues that the natural world exists for human convenience and exploitation and that **human lives have the greatest intrinsic value**. Therefore, we are morally obligated to protect and preserve nature because it

is in *Humanity's* best interest to do so. In a sense, this matches the Ecocentric stance, but the motivation is different.

Anthropocentrists also say that humans have an **elevated moral standing** and can rightfully try to benefit as much as possible from the environment. This ethical viewpoint maintains that humans have substantial advantages over other forms of life; for example, higher intellectual ability and a keener sense of morality. As a result, in certain circumstances, anthropocentrism permits the **prioritization** of human needs over other forms of life.

This position can be argued from a practical standpoint, in the sense that it would naturally benefit us to take care of the environment regardless of our motivations to do so. Or one could consider the case of improved morality, responsibility, and self-growth through the process of becoming custodians of the natural world.

However, some anthropocentrists would also argue that if it was more within our interest to exploit and consume nature that we can and should. If we required a dam for electricity, even if damming the river would devastate a downriver forest, or if we needed to clear land for growing a cocoa plantation, or if we wanted to kill off a local predator to ensure our sheep can graze safely then, in some cases, we are within our rights to do so under Human-Centered environmental ethics.

## Speciesism

**Speciesism** is the belief that the **human species is inherently superior to other species**. The term was coined in the 1970's by British philosopher, Richard D. Ryder, and later popularized by Australian philosopher and founder of the animal rights movement, Peter Singer. Based on this premise, **humans have rights and privileges that are otherwise denied to other sentient animals**. Ryder used the term to challenge the morality of the current practices where non-human animals were exploited in research and farming, domestically, and in the wild. He also drew a conscious parallel with the terms racism and sexism, pointing out that all prejudices are based on physical differences. He believed that one day "enlightened minds" would come to condemn speciesism just as racism was condemned.

Bioethicist Bonnie Steinbock rejected the analogy between speciesism and racism. She argued that animals were not treated differently just because they had fur. **They were actually inherently different from humans in morally relevant ways**. Some theorists deny animals any moral status or equality consideration due to their lack of consciousness, reasoning, or autonomy (Kant, Descartes, Aquinas). Other theorists give animals some moral status as they have interests of their own but animals lack the ability to respect another agent's rights or display moral reciprocity. Beings without interests of their own (such as plants, works of art, or embryos) do not have moral status, but if there are moral reasons to protect them, they may have moral value.

Peter Singer believed that the sole criterion for moral standing was **sentience** and his animal welfare view states that there is no essential difference between the pain of animals and human beings. Singer stated that while **equal consideration of animals** would lead to better treatment, especially of livestock animals, he **did not believe that humans and animals should be treated equally**. He did not see an animal's life as being as valuable as a human's life.

William Baxter's **anthropocentrism** view is in direct contrast to Singer's. Singer's **animal rights** movement believes that **animals have the right to live freely** without being used and exploited for the desires of humans. But Baxter posited that **animals have no moral consideration on their own**. Animals have rights only insofar as they are of value to us.

## E. Legislation

Environmental legislation refers to the **body of laws, ordinances, and policies** which regulate air and water quality, endangered wildlife, wilderness, and other environmental factors. These laws cover many legal conditions and considerations but their ultimate goal is to **regulate the interaction of humans** with the environment and safeguard the health of the general public and the country's biosphere.

Environmental law in the US was established in the 1960s, coinciding with the founding of the environmentalism movement which increased awareness and concern over environmental issues in the US and globally especially with regards to the dangers of pollution and resource mismanagement.

In **1969** the **National Environmental Policy Act (or NEPA)** was ratified, establishing a country-wide policy endorsing the protection of the environment. The act requires federal agencies to take environmental considerations into account in all decision-making. One of the methods used to ensure compliance with the act is the usage of an **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**. An EIS is a document that is required for the approval of any actions that may have a significant impact on the environment.

The successful implementation of NEPA paved the way for several more environmental acts, including the **Clean Air Act in 1970**, the **Clean Water Act of 1972**, and the **Endangered Species Act of 1973**.

## F. Global Warming

Over the last 200 years, the concentration of **carbon dioxide** (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the atmosphere has increased dramatically. The rampant burning of fossil fuels and mass deforestation globally has released large quantities of stored CO<sub>2</sub> from long-standing **biomass** deposits into the atmosphere. To put this into perspective, the CO<sub>2</sub> concentration in the atmosphere in 1800 was about 280 parts per million, but as of 2021, it has increased to approximately 410 parts per million. But what does this mean? What are the effects of so much carbon dioxide in the atmosphere?

Carbon dioxide is one of three "**greenhouse gasses**" present in the Earth's atmosphere that have the ability to absorb infrared radiation emitted from the surface of the planet. The other two are methane and water vapor. They do occur naturally but human activity, mostly through unchecked industrialization, has **rapidly increased** the concentration of these gasses in the atmosphere. This has resulted in a decrease in the rate of **global heat loss**, and has ultimately led to a warming effect on the planet. The effect is a continuously warming Earth, which has led to the polar ice caps melting, glaciers receding, more extreme weather conditions, and the increasing extinction of many species.

## The Ozone Layer

The **ozone layer** surrounds the earth and filters harmful ultraviolet rays that can cause skin cancer, sunburns, cataracts and even be detrimental to plants. The ozone consists of three oxygen atoms ( $O_3$ ) with 90% of the ozone located in the stratosphere and the rest in the troposphere. In 1974, Sherwood Rowland and Mario Molina discovered that **chloro-fluoro-carbons** (CFCs) along with **UV radiation** could destroy ozone molecules. This led to a ban of CFCs in aerosol sprays in the US in 1979. In 1985, the British Antarctic Survey team found an area ozone layer over Antarctica that has been depleted. This is known as the ozone hole and was continually depleted each year at an alarming rate. The **Montreal Protocol** was signed in 1987, where 24 nations pledged to reduce CFC production by at least 50%. Since then, **every country has signed** the Montreal Protocol and the use and production of **CFCs are down 95%** from the 1980s. The ozone hole is projected to return to pre-1980 levels by the second half of the 21st century. Some consider this to be an example of “**moral change**”. The initial signers showed concern for people in other countries as well as future generations.

## Air Pollution

Air pollution is the presence of materials (gases or particles) or forms of energy in the atmosphere that can pose a risk, or harm, to humans, animals, and plants. Most pollution is **human-made** and comes from our factories and vehicle emissions, aerosol cans, and even cigarette smoke. The burning of **fossil fuels** (coal or oil) is one of the main causes of air pollution. Other sources are **natural** and include volcanic eruptions and wildfires. Air pollutants can be classified by the effect that they have on living things. **Primary pollutants** have a direct effect or harm on the environment while **secondary pollutants** are created by reactions between primary pollutants and the components of the atmosphere.

The EPA regulates and develops guidelines for six common pollutants. **Carbon monoxide** (CO) is a major air pollutant and comes from vehicle emissions, wildfires, residential fires, and industrial processes. It is formed from the incomplete combustion of organic compounds. Carbon monoxide is harmful when inhaled in large amounts and can lead to death. **Sulfur dioxide** ( $SO_2$ ) is emitted from volcanic eruptions, the burning of fossil fuels, industrial processes, and heavy vehicles that burn fuel with sulfur content. Sulfur dioxide can lead to difficulty breathing, lung damage, and loss of smell. Poorly ventilated gas stoves and heaters can be a significant source of nitrogen oxides. **Nitrogen oxides** can damage the respiratory tract. While **ozone** ( $O_3$ ) is naturally present in the atmosphere at low concentrations, reactions between nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds can lead to larger concentrations of ozone (“**smog**”). Large concentrations of ozone can harm the respiratory system and shorten life expectancy. **Particulate matter** is a complex mixture of solid particles and liquid droplets found in the air. Dust, smoke, and pollen are large enough to be seen with the naked eye but other particles are microscopic. Some particulate matter can get into the lungs or bloodstream and cause damage. Major sources of **lead** (Pb) pollution include chemical industries such as glass and manufacturing and metal processing. Lead poisoning can hinder brain development.

## G. Extinction

Due to our destructive industrialization practices, humans have become directly responsible for much of the damages to global ecosystems and caused many unforeseen and devastating consequences. Many animals are not as adaptable as humans, and when their habitats are destroyed many go extinct as they have nowhere else to go and no way to adapt to the changes fast enough. Not to mention all the benefits that plants provide to their environment to the global ecosystem itself. Ecosystems are very **delicate** and quickly become **unbalanced when disrupted**.

To combat this, the **Endangered Species Act (ESA)** was enacted in **1973** to protect plant and animal species that are under threat of extinction. The ESA also provides for the conservation of "threatened" species, which are those that are likely to become endangered in the near future, and "endangered" species, which are those that are likely to become extinct in the near future. This act is administered by the **United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)** and **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)**.

If a species is identified as needing protection, a one-year study is performed. If the species is granted protection, the public is notified as to where its habitat is located and the laws pertaining to the conservation thereof. The FWS and NOAA then creates a **Species Recovery Plan** and, depending on the outcome of the plan, the ESA can then down-list or delist the species. They have been criticized for taking too much time and money to enact their plans. Even so, though the ESA focussed on the US specifically, they have partnered with the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** to enact the **World Conservation Strategy** to expand their efforts and coordinate globally.

## H. Energy

The total amount of energy used by a country, community, household, or person is called **energy consumption**. It includes all forms of energy such as from renewable sources like water, wind, and solar power, or from non-renewable sources like oil and coal. This is calculated by comparing the **energy consumption per capita** by dividing the total energy consumption by the number of people in the country. The countries with the highest energy consumption are typically those located in very hot or cold climates who use a lot of energy to keep their homes and workplaces comfortable. Developing countries also usually consume more energy than developed countries as they seek further industrial development.

## I. Poverty

Poverty is characterized by an **inability** to meet one's basic needs due to economic constraints. The primary indicator of poverty is **low income**, with poverty typically being defined as living on around \$2 a day, and extreme poverty as living on less than \$1.25 a day. Further, due to low income, high birth and death rates, and high population growth rates poorer countries tend to have an **uneven age distribution**, skewing towards younger age groups.

There are two types of poverty. **Absolute poverty** is the inability to afford the basic necessities of life such as food, shelter, clean water, education, and healthcare. **Relative poverty** on the other hand is the poverty compared to the standard of living in one's economy. A person may be able to afford basic necessities but cannot meet the standard of life as others around them.

The rapid increase in population size puts the entire population at risk of exceeding the carrying capacity of the ecosystem. **Carrying capacity** is the maximum population size of a species that an ecosystem can support. If the population exceeds the carrying capacity, the ecosystem will not be able to support the population indefinitely and will exceed the available resources, leading to a decrease in the quality of life and potential death.

The growth of poverty-ridden populations could threaten **global sustainability**, which is the goal of meeting current human needs without compromising the ecosystem services and natural resources future generations will need. If these populations continue to grow at their current rates, resources will be consumed unsustainably and will not be available for future generations and threaten current generations. Poverty and related population and resource depletion issues are not only the concerns of developing countries and will affect developed nations, thus making the eradication of poverty every persons' concern, no matter where you live.

## Chapter 14: Quiz

**1. How do anthropocentric theories understand the environment?**

- a. As something to be used by humans and for human benefit.
- b. As a contained system that should be left untouched by humans.
- c. As a person in its own right.
- d. As something with its own unique morality.

**2. How did Homesteaders damage the process of the Homestead Act of 1862?**

- a. By organizing protests against the bill.
- b. By opposing the bill in Congress.
- c. By trying to forcibly remove people settled under the Homestead Act.
- d. By taking advantage of preemption which allowed them to settle now and pay later.

**3. Anthropocentrism focuses on what is the base standard for evaluating morality?**

- a. Spirituality
- b. Humans
- c. Natural selection
- d. The global environment

**4. According to the eight principles of deep ecology, is it permissible for humans to kill other species in nature?**

- a. Only for basic survival
- b. Only to protect the ecosystem
- c. Never under any circumstances
- d. Yes for plants but no for animals

**5. Deep ecology is often confused with which other perspective in environmental ethics?**

- a. Social Ecology
- b. Ecofascism
- c. Ecocentrism
- d. Ecofeminism

**6. Why was environmentalism established?**

- a. Because of the need to protect the environment from hazards and pollutants.
- b. Because many studies proved the dangerous consequences of using pesticides.
- c. Because of the growing fear of global warming and rising sea levels.
- d. Because of the millennium development goals.

**7. What is the purpose of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?**

- a. To provide a thorough analysis of decisions made by federal agencies relevant to the environment.
- b. To force other countries to accept the environmentalist philosophy, and stop doing irreparable damage to the environment.
- c. To increase taxes on corporations that emit too much CO<sub>2</sub>.
- d. A company focuses first on helping society and ends up making a profit.

**8. What are the three major greenhouse gasses in the Earth's atmosphere?**

- a. Methane, carbon dioxide, and sulfur dioxide
- b. Carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitric oxides
- c. Carbon dioxide, methane, and water vapor.
- d. Methane, carbon dioxide, and nitric oxides

**9. What year was the Endangered Species Act enacted?**

- a. 1942
- b. 1954
- c. 1973
- d. 1965

**10. What is relative poverty?**

- a. The condition where a person does not have the minimum amount of income needed to meet the minimum requirements for one or more basic living needs over an extended period of time.
- b. The amount of money needed to live a lavish lifestyle.
- c. A family of six who all live in one room and lack access to newspapers or television.
- d. The condition in which people lack the minimum amount of income needed in order to maintain the average standard of living in the society in which they live.



# Appendix A: Overview of Ethical Theories, Theorists, and Terminology

**Aquinas, Thomas** (1225-1274 C.E.) was a Dominican monk who spent his working life studying, teaching, and writing at the University of Paris. His great work, the Summa Theologica, unified the natural law tradition passed on from the Romans. This was the Biblical tradition through which the Law became identified with the mind of the living God, and the philosophical sophistication of the newly rediscovered work of Aristotle.

Thomas Aquinas believed in the ethics of natural law. It considers that right and wrong, in nature, exists in line with following rationality within society. This ties together the nature of human beings and moral law. The Principle of Forfeiture allows a look into how a confrontation of basic values can end. It states that if one threatens another, then the one imposing the harm no longer has rights. This principle goes into further details covering actions of self-defense and those actions taken in war and capital punishment.

**Aristotle** (382-322 B.C.E.) recorded the first systematic description of virtue ethics in his famous work The Nicomachean Ethics. According to Aristotle, when people are better able to regulate their emotions and their reason, they acquire good habits of character. Aristotle closely observed nature; he believed nature was purposive and did nothing in vain. He also believed if morality refers to our actions, and our actions are a reflection of our beliefs, then morality ought to address what we believe. Aristotle, following Plato, defined the soul as the core or essence of a living being. Although the soul is not a tangible object, it is not separable from the body, in Aristotle's view. By Aristotle's account, the soul has three components: our passion, our faculties, and our states of character. He defines supreme good as an activity of the rational soul in accordance to virtue. According to Aristotle, there are two basic types of virtues: intellectual and moral. He said one should strive to become a virtuous person, and argued that each of the moral virtues was a means between two corresponding vices.

**Axiologically** based theories hold that the rightness and wrongness of actions depends entirely on considerations of goodness (value). There are two subtypes:

- Consequentialist axiology holds that the rightness and wrongness of actions depends entirely on the goodness (value) of their consequences.
- Non-consequentialist axiology holds that the rightness and wrongness of actions does not depend entirely on the goodness (value) of their consequences. These can be further classified into:
  - Strong nonconsequentialist theories hold that right or wrong do not depend at all on the consequences of actions.
  - Weak nonconsequentialist theories hold that the consequences of our actions are relevant in determining right or wrong but are not decisive.

**Bentham, Jeremy** (1748-1832 C.E.) was a psychological hedonist. He believed that the desire for pleasure and aversion of pain were the only motivation for human actions. He defended the principle of

utility and did not promote selfishness. The Principle of Utility states that an action is right if it produces at least as much (or more) of an increase in the happiness of all affected by it, than any alternative action. An action is wrong if it does not do this.

**Consequentialism**, as its name suggests, is the view that normative properties depend only on consequences. This general approach can be applied at different levels to different normative properties of different kinds of things. The most prominent example of this is consequentialism about the moral rightness of an act. This philosophy holds that whether an act is morally right depends only on the consequences of that act. The paradigm case of consequentialism is utilitarianism, whose classic proponents were Jeremy Bentham (1789), John Stuart Mill (1861), and Henry Sidgwick (1907). Classic utilitarianism is consequentialist as opposed to deontological because of what it denies. It denies that moral rightness depends directly on anything other than consequences. The moral rightness of an act depends only on the consequences (as opposed to the circumstances or the intrinsic nature of the act or anything that happens before the act).

**Deontological Theories** hold that the rightness and wrongness of actions do not depend entirely on considerations of goodness (value). Deontology, the science of duty, focuses on the rightness or wrongness of motives. The foremost modern defender of this theory is Immanuel Kant, who insisted that an act cannot be judged right or wrong based on the resulting consequences, which are often out of our hands or a matter of luck, but the principle that guides the action. He felt that people should act with the right intentions, according to the right principles, doing one's duty for its own sake rather than for personal gain and without concern for consequences. Ethics based on deontology is often described as the "ethics of what is right." A deontological ethical decision looks at the problem very differently than teleological theory. It looks at the moral obligations and/or duties of the decision maker, based on principles and rules of behavior. There are two types:

- Strong deontological theories contend right or wrong is not dependent on good/bad.
- Weak deontological theories believe good or bad is relevant to right or wrong but not decisive.  
And two subtypes:
  - o Rule-based deontology holds that rightness or wrongness of an action depends on the actions keeping with a rule or rules.
  - o Non-rule based deontology holds that the rightness or wrongness of an action does not depend on the actions keeping with a rule or rules.

The distinction between strong and weak forms for all theories centers on the difference between what is relevant and what is decisive (all else is deemed irrelevant.)

**Divine Command Theory** is an example of a deontological theory. It actually refers to a cluster of related theories that state an action is right if God has decreed that it is right. The basic tenet is that God's will is the basis of morality.

**Emotivism** is a non-cognitive theory where value judgments, including moral judgments, do not state facts, but are expressions of emotions or attitudes. It analyzes moral judgments as expressions of unfavorable or favorable emotion.

**Entitlement** is guarantee of access to benefits because of right or by agreement through law. It is also casually used to refer to the belief that one deserves some particular reward or benefit.

**Epictetus** (55-135 C.E.) was an educated, freed slave of Greek origin, who accomplished fame as a Stoic philosopher. Stoicism was a school of philosophy during the Roman Empire that emphasized reason as a means of understanding the natural state of things, or logos. It was a means of freeing oneself from emotional distress. No direct known writings of Epictetus survived. The beliefs and thoughts of Epictetus were chronicled by his pupil Arrian, in the famous works, *The Discourses* and *The Enchiridion*, or the *The Handbook*.

**Epicurus** (341-270 B.C.E.) believed in managing one's desires for a balanced life. Focusing on the present and not on an unfortunate occurrence of the future, such as death, will lead to a better life. Epicurus believed the good feelings that come with life are, naturally, the most immediately noticeable; yet, not every pleasure is one in which action is taken. Those actions in which pains occur are not all taken either. There is a balance of times when a painful road is taken in order to later experience a higher level of happiness, which occurs after experiencing pain. Epicurus fully believed prudence is derived from virtues which tie directly with pleasure and one cannot exist without the other.

**Ethical Relativism** is the concept that what is morally right or wrong may vary fundamentally from person to person or culture to culture. It is supported by the absence of one universal morality in modern culture.

There are two types of ethical relativism:

1. Descriptive relativism notes that there are differences among ethical practices and standards of different cultures, without evaluation of their justification. It is based on empirical fact.
2. Prescriptive relativism goes further and claims that people ought not to apply standards of one culture to evaluate the behavior of another culture.

**Ethics of care** is a normative ethical theory that was developed by feminists in the second half of the twentieth century during the women's movement. While consequentialist and deontological ethical theories emphasize universal standards and impartiality, ethics of care is a communitarian approach that emphasizes the importance of relationships. Ethics of care is also a basis for care-focused feminists theorizing on maternal ethics. Feminist theorists suggest caring should be performed and care givers valued in both public and private sectors. This proposed paradigm shift in ethics encourages that an ethic of caring be the social responsibility of both men and women.

**Existentialism** is a philosophy that focuses on finding one's self and the meaning of life through free will, choice, and personal responsibility. Existentialists believe that people are continually searching to discover who and what they are in life as they exercise choices based on their experiences, beliefs, and outlooks. Personal choices are unique and independent of an objective form of truth. An existentialist believes that a person should be required to choose and be responsible without the help of laws, ethnic

rules, or traditions. Because existentialist ethics reject the idea of absolute moral laws and most religious-based ethics, it has to find moral significance without these traditional justifications.

**Gilligan, Carol**, a psychologist who studied the differences in morality between the sexes, found that men tended to define morality in more global terms, and women used more effective terms. Her body of work, and others, led to the notion of a female moral perspective. This perspective focuses on the context of relationships, emphasizes responsiveness and responsibility to others, and focuses on love, trust, and human bonding.

**Harm Principle** holds that individual liberty is justifiably limited to prevent harm to others. John Stuart Mill claims that only the harm principle can justify the limitation of liberty. This principle is one of the most widely accepted.

**Hobbes, Thomas** (1588-1679 C.E.) lived in revolutionary times. For the first time in history, Puritan revolutionaries had engineered the overthrow and beheading of the English King, Charles I, in 1641. Hobbes' writing in 1651 had, therefore, a very recent example as motivation for the development of his theory of government. His account of the origin of government in the social contract, later picked up by John Locke and John Rawls as the moral basis of a civil society, is for our purposes, less interesting than his articulation of another notion: the natural rights of the citizen as the moral foundation of that government. Self-preservation, and what is needed to achieve this, is seen as the only natural motive when researching the human race. Yet, Hobbes believed in a state where the citizens follow, unquestioningly, the government that allows the people to live in peace and without fear. Hobbes gives an argument for survival: submit to the leader or die, either at the leader's hands or at the hands of your neighbor. Because you value your life, you sign the social contract that establishes the Leviathan, and obey it until that life is threatened by it. This contract abolishes all other rights. At the point when the government fails to live up to its end of the bargain—protecting the lives of the people—then the people are no longer obligated to support the government.

**Individual Liberty** is justifiably limited to prevent harm to self. In modern philosophy and law, it is described as “an act for the good of another, without that person's consent,” as parents do for children. At the expense of liberty, paternalists believe they can make better decisions than the people for whom they act. The principle of paternalism can arise in any situation where people hold power over others, such as parenting, education, and medicine. It seems most controversial in cases of criminal law, where the state seeks to protect a person's good by acting to protect the person from him/herself. The state does this coercively, often against a person's will. John Stuart Mill clearly rejects this principle as a basis for limiting liberty.

**Jus Ad Bellum** refers to what Medieval scholars believed. They said a war could not be entered without certain aspects of the purpose and outcome being met. The doctrine of jus ad bellum determines when it is moral to enter a war. The doctrine of jus in bellum dictates how a war should be conducted during the course of the conflict. When determining to enter a war, the following guidelines exist: the authority waging the war must be legitimate; all heads of state must be notified of the rules; the war must have just cause, yet be the last resort; peace must be the ultimate goal with success being probable; and the intent for starting the war must not be one of hatred or vengefulness.

**Kant, Immanuel** (1724-1804 C.E.) paved a new way for the thought processes of ethics. He did not take the standard role many before him did; instead, he chose to question, as did Socrates, the wrongness of human acts. Humans are able to choose and judge what actions they take for rightness. When one chooses to commit a wrongful act, that person will not be looked upon favorably.

In one of Kant's writings, he describes and distinguishes between what is good, and what is not good, and the factors that determine this. He believed good will is the only good that is without qualification in existence, while explaining how something can only be good if it is compatible with good itself. Kant helped to relate this in regards to one performing a duty out of duty or just doing it for no other purpose. This, in turn, is what makes a good person good. In addition, it is the presence of self-governing reason—autonomy—in each person that Kant thought offered decisive grounds for viewing each individual as possessed of equal worth and deserving of equal respect.

**Kantianism** is a deontological, act-based, human valuing philosophy. Kant believed people were inherently bad and that we needed to use our reason to come up with a moral framework to transcend mortal life and ultimately gain entrance to heaven. To do this, people have to live by acts that are as selfless as possible. Kant's Categorical Imperatives are maxim-based obligations for moral reasoning and behavior.

**King Jr., Martin Luther** (1929-1968 C.E.) built on the themes that have been with us since Epictetus. From the Stoics, there is disdain for the punishments, including fetters and prisons, that the unjust world visits upon the just man in the attempt to silence him. From Thomas Aquinas, citing Augustine (as does King), there is the certainty that the unjust law is no law at all, and should in no way be obeyed. From Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Thomas Jefferson, the willingness not only to assert constitutional rights, but to insist that they be incorporated into the law of the land, in this case, all the lands of the United States. We may add, from Jefferson, the acceptance of a certain quota of violence as the cost of liberty; from Kant, the centrality of the notion of human dignity; from Josiah Royce, the fierce devotion to that cause which fulfilled and consumed his life; and from Rawls, his contemporary, the recognition that peace and plenty are worthless without justice.

**Legal Paternalism** involves the state acting like a parent and forcing the citizens to behave in their own best interests by restricting liberty.

**Locke, John** (1632-1704 C.E.) comes from a different revolution than Hobbes. Shortly after Hobbes wrote, monarchy was restored. When it threatened to become inconvenient again, the English Parliament lost patience with their king, threw him out of the country, and invited Prince William of Orange, Prince of the Netherlands, to be their king. He was a good king. More to the point, Parliament had established that it and it alone, was the representative of the people, and had the right to control succession to the English throne. Despite all the flaws of democracy of the time, England was firmly in democratic hands. Locke's writings celebrate that revolution, the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

**Mill, John Stuart** (1806-1873 C.E.) was a utilitarian. The greatest happiness for the greatest number was his goal. Mill also added that some kinds of happiness were innately greater than others, as was shown by people favoring one over the other. In his work *On Liberty*, Mill argued that free speech is

crucial to the greatest happiness for the greatest number. He thought that restricting free speech prevented knowledge, and that happiness can only be achieved through knowledge. Free speech was necessary to promote knowledge and learning.

**Moral Justification** is commonly used in two different senses, one positive and the other negative. The negative sense is the one which is typically accompanied by an accusation that the justifier is being insincere. It is, in this sense, that fast-talkers are sometimes accused of being able to justify anything and everything. The positive sense of justification, on the other hand, involves bringing others to see our actions as reasonable. In this sense, a course of action is justified if there are better reasons in favor of it than there are against it. Preferably, these reasons should be ones that other people could agree are good ones. It is this sense of justification that is important for morality. Moral justification, then, means showing that there are more or better moral reasons for a course of action than against it.

**Moral Legalism** holds that the moral rightness of acts is determined solely by rules, principles, or commandments. Moral legalism can be either consequentialist or non-consequentialist in perspective.

Examples of moral legalism are:

1. Kantianism – One ought always to act on maxims that can be universal.
2. Ethical egoism – One ought to always act to maximize one's personal good.
3. Divine Command Theory – Whatever God commands is right.
4. Principle of Justice – One ought always to act justly.
5. Natural Law Ethics – One ought always to act in accordance with nature.
6. Utilitarianism – One ought to always act to maximize the general good.

**Moral Particularism** contends moral principles are secondary to outcomes. The rightness of an act depends solely on the situations in which it is performed, and is not derived from rules, principles, or commandments. Moral particularism is predominantly consequentialist and may be guided by moral principles.

**Natural Law Theory** refers to a type of moral theory, as well as to a type of legal theory, but the core claims of the two kinds of theory are logically independent. According to natural law moral theory, the moral standards that govern human behavior are, in some sense, objectively derived from the nature of human beings and the nature of the world. While being logically independent of natural law legal theory, the two theories intersect. The first is a theory of morality that is roughly characterized by the following theses:

- First moral propositions have, what is sometimes called objective standing, in the sense that such propositions are the bearers of objective truth-value. Moral propositions can be objectively true or false.
- The second thesis constituting the core of natural law moral theory is the claim that standards of morality are, in some sense, derived from the nature of the world, and the nature of human beings.

Thomas Aquinas, for example, identifies the rational nature of human beings as that which defines moral law: the rule and measure of human acts is the reason, which is the first principle of human acts. According to natural law legal theory, the authority of legal standards necessarily derived, at least in part, from considerations having to do with the moral merit of those standards. Classical natural law theory, such as the theory of Aquinas focuses on the overlap between natural law moral and legal theories.

**Plato** (424-348 B.C.E.) uses the myth, The Ring of Gyges, to illustrate the concept of morality and egoism in his book, The Republic. To Plato, the soul has three parts: desire, spirit, and reason. Plato, following the ideas of his teacher, Socrates, considered the soul as the essence of people, and responsible for deciding how we behave. Plato considered the soul to be an eternal occupant of our being that is continually reborn in subsequent bodies after our death. The Platonic soul is made up of three parts: the logos (mind), thymos (emotion), and eros (desire). Each part has a specific defined function in a balanced and peaceful soul. Plato saw the soul as a ghostly occupant of the body.

**Rawls, John** (1921-2002 C.E.) attempted to associate Kantian philosophy with the law. Unlike Kant, he was concerned with the issue of fairness and social justice. He developed a social contract theory of justice. Social contract describes a broad class of theories that try to explain the ways in which people form state and/or maintain social order.

Rawls believed in a fair viewpoint of justice regarding each member of society, in which social cooperation is followed by a form of established government. In advance, the members of this hypothetical society are to decide what is acceptable, determining the principles of justice. The thought is that no one knows the details of their societal standing. This veil of ignorance, the key concept of this scenario, allows for judgments to be impartial.

**Rousseau, Jean-Jacques** (1712-1778 C.E.) attempts to thread a path between the philosophies of Hobbes and Locke, trying to solve the problem of legitimacy in organized human society. Hobbes gives an argument for survival: submit to the social contract, and relinquish any other rights. Locke preserves rights, and supports a very limited government that operates by majority vote, limiting the Ruler. Can majorities be speculatively wrong? Is every majority vote legitimate? Lock has to say yes, allowing only for a written constitution (also terminable by the majority) to protect us from the mob. Rousseau sees that, while either of these schemas can work (both have), both are legitimate only by chance. Rousseau insists that Society, the product of the first unanimous Contract, carries the true will of the people, the General Will. The General Will is distinct from the State, a product of a majority vote, which can only give us the Will of All. According to Rousseau, therefore, Locke is wrong in his insistence that the majority is always right, or at least that there is no conceivable power to place against the majority, and Hobbes is wrong in his abandonment of liberty in the name of security. Even though Rousseau and Hobbes did agree on some political issues, they did not agree on the aspect of the social contract. Hobbes believed in following the social contract of the ruler until one's life is threatened. While Rousseau states an understanding of this notion, he believed that people should follow their free will, which allows for everyone's freedom. This equates to the existence of people within a community and what kind of solidarity they can create within a community.

**Socrates** (469-399 B.C.E.) was an ancient Greek philosopher who is widely credited for laying the foundation for western philosophy. By far the most important source of information about Socrates is Plato, who depicts him as a contradictory character. Plato's dialogues feature Socrates, a teacher who denies having disciples, as a man of reason who obeys a divine voice in his head, and a pious man who is executed for religious improprieties. Socrates disparages the pleasures of the senses, yet is excited by youthful beauty. He is devoted to the education of the boys of Athens, yet indifferent to his own sons; few other characters have so fascinated the western world.

**Teleological Moral Theory** can be described as the "ethics of what is good." A teleological ethical decision considers rightness or wrongness based on the outcomes of that decision. Teleological moral theory is any that is both axiological and consequential. The principal forms of this theory are:

- Micro ethics is concerned with the good of the group when the good is the good of the individuals that make up the group.
- Macro ethics values the survival and well-being of individuals, groups, and entities (such as nature). The good of the whole does not necessarily relate to the good of the parts.

**Utilitarianism** is one example of a consequentialist moral theory. At the core of utilitarianism is the Principle of Utility or the Greatest Happiness Principle. An ethical decision is one that offers the greatest net utility: the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people.

**Virtue Ethics** places an emphasis on who you are rather than on what you do. Morality stems from the identity and/or character of the individual, rather than the belief that, in order to live a moral life, one must begin by developing good character. We, therefore, ought to act in ways that exhibit virtues (such as courage or compassion), even if that means doing what might generally be seen as bad or bringing about undesirable consequences.



# Chapter Review Question Answer Key

Chapter 1: (Morality & Ethics)	1. A	2. B	3. A	4. D	5. C
	6. D	7. D	8. C	9. B	10. A
Chapter 2: (Ethical Relativism)	1. A	2. B	3. D	4. B	5. C
	6. A	7. A	8. B	9. D	10. B
Chapter 3: (Theory of Natural and Moral Law)	1. A	2. D	3. B	4. D	5. A
	6. B	7. D	8. C	9. B	10. C
Chapter 4: (The Ancient Greek Views on Ethics)	1. C	2. C	3. D	4. A	5. D
	6. C	7. D	8. D	9. B	10. C
Chapter 5: (Consequentialist vs Non-Consequentialist)	1. A	2. C	3. D	4. B	5. A
	6. B	7. C	8. A	9. C	10. D
Chapter 6: (Morality within the Western World / Religion and ethics)	1. A	2. B	3. D	4. A	5. D
	6. D	7. A	8. D	9. A	10. D
Chapter 7: (Ethics in Life and Death)	1. D	2. C	3. A	4. A	5. B
	6. C	7. A	8. A	9. B	10. C
Chapter 8: (Moral Issues in War and Peace)	1. A	2. D	3. D	4. D	5. B
	6. D	7. B	8. C	9. D	10. A

Chapter 9: (Moral Issues in the Economy)	1. B	2. C	3. D	4. A	5. A
	6. B	7. D	8. A	9. B	10. A
Chapter 10: (The Justice System)	1. A	2. D	3. C	4. C	5. A
	6. D	7. A	8. C	9. A	10. B
Chapter 11: (Human Rights Ethics)	1. A	2. D	3. A	4. D	5. B
	6. C	7. A	8. D	9. A	10. D
Chapter 12: (Ethics in Relationships and Sexuality)	1. A	2. D	3. D	4. C	5. A
	6. D	7. A	8. C	9. A	10. B
Chapter 13: (Ethics in Healthcare)	1. D	2. A	3. B	4. A	5. D
	6. A	7. A	8. D	9. C	10. B
Chapter 14: (Ethics in the Environment)	1. A	2. D	3. B	4. A	5. C
	6. A	7. A	8. A	9. C	10. D



