



Moritz Gruban

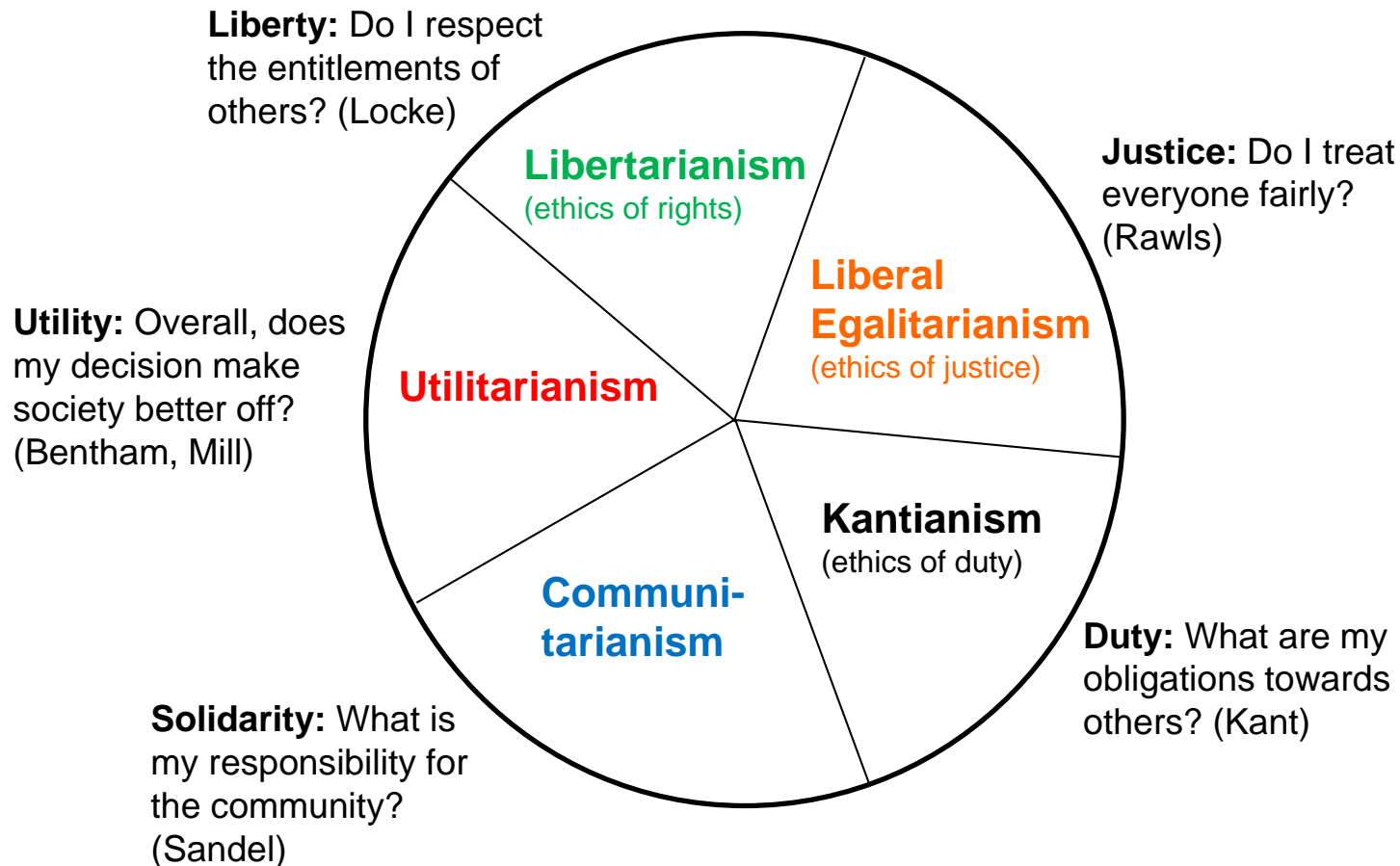
Introduction to Business Ethics

Session 4

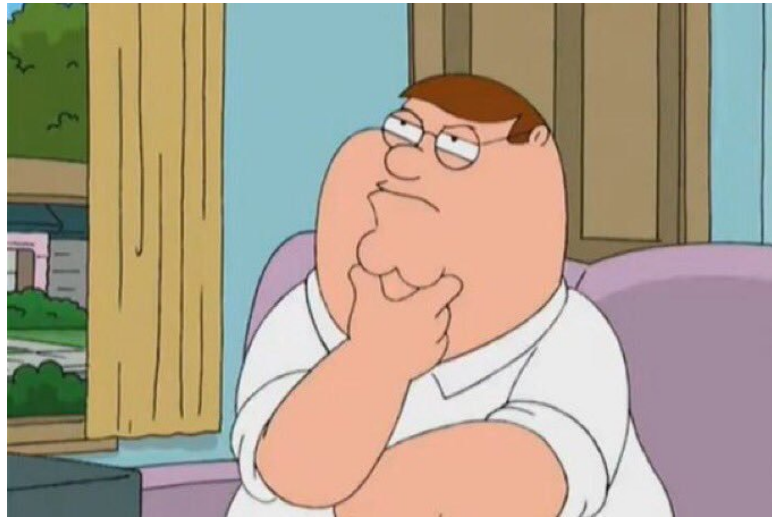
Learning targets

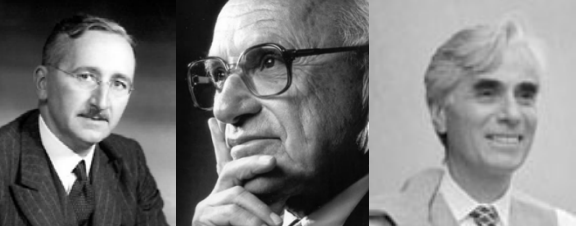
- Get a sense for the main arguments of libertarianism.
- Understand and discuss critically the trade-off between consequentialist (=utilitarian) and non-consequentialist principles.
- Understand the major objections towards libertarianism.

“Decision Wheel”



What are the main ideas of libertarianism?





Hayek

Friedman

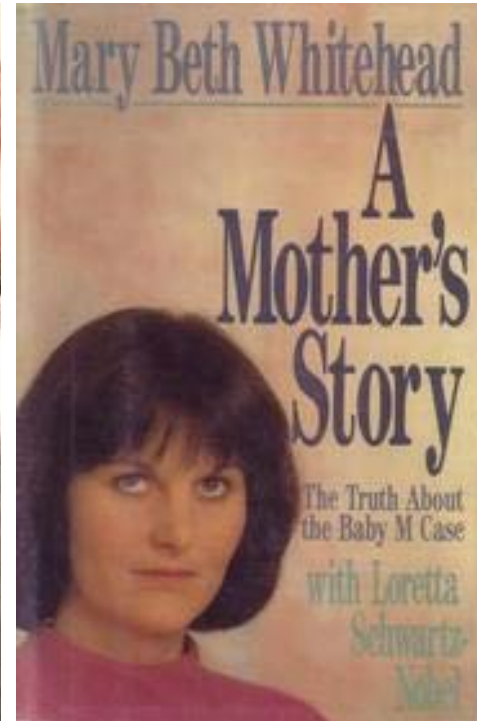
Nozick

Libertarianism: Ethics of rights

- Individuals have a fundamental right to liberty and self-ownership, the right to do whatever they want with the things they own, provided they respect other people's rights to do the same.
- It follows that people have a right to non-interference (negative rights).
- Rights-based libertarianism advocates minimizing social and governmental power, action, control, and regulation, and maximizing individual liberty and freedom.
- Rights extend to other certain basic and unalienable entitlements that should be respected and protected in every single action: natural rights or human rights (John Locke).

What money can't buy?

The case of Mary Beth Whitehead

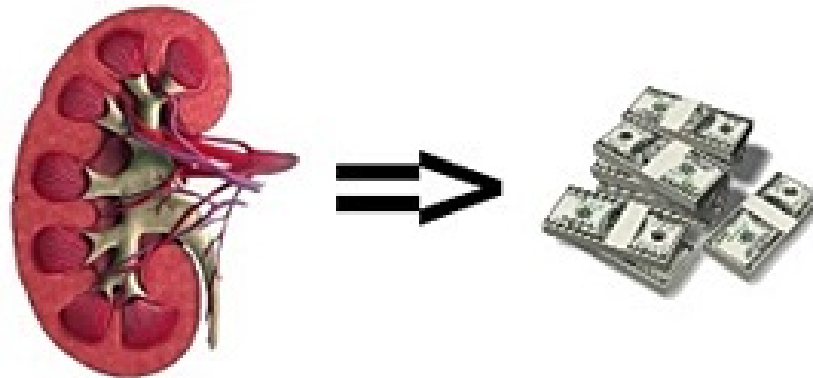


Mary Beth Whitehead and her husband, Richard, leave the courthouse in Hackensack, N.J., Sept. 10, 1986. Whitehead acted as a paid-surrogate mother for William and Betsy Stern but then refused to give up custody of the baby girl.

See Sandel (2010): 91-101

Is it right to buy and sell kidneys?

Crisis? Crisis is running over the planet, but you've got a chance! The cost of a human kidney is **\$70-80K** and it could be enough to pay all your debts, credits and much more. You can help yourself right now: just sell your kidney. Hurry up!



See Sandel (2010): 70-72

Right to die? Assisted suicide



Is it right to punish consensual cannibalism?



Armin Meiwes

See Sandel (2010): 73-74

Is it wrong to have mandatory military service in the Swiss army?



See Sandel (2010): 79-91

Problems with libertarianism

- There are not only negative obligations, i.e. to not interfere with others, but also positive obligations, i.e. to help others in need → we have duties to each other.
- A condition of unfettered liberty may result in inequality and oppression of the many by a privileged few who are powerful → an unregulated free market may lead to exploitation and massive inequality.
- The right way of valuing goods and social practices depends on the purpose those goods and practices serve. Some goods and practices must not be degraded in a market, even if there is mutual consent among affected parties.
- The emphasis of consent is often misguided and permits self-inflicted affronts to human dignity.

Libertarianism in a nutshell with Ron Swanson (Parks and Recreation)



"I've been quite open about this around the office: I don't want this parks department to build any parks, because I don't believe in government. I think that all government is a waste of taxpayer money. My dream is to have the park system privatized and run entirely for profit by corporations, like Chuck E. Cheese."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcHjZ4PSTfs>

Wrap-Up

- Libertarians emphasize individual freedom, freedom of choice, and self-ownership. If humans own their bodies and their lives, they should be free to do whatever they want with them (as long as they don't harm others).
- Libertarians favor free markets and oppose government regulation. Thus, they advocate for a minimal state – one that enforces contracts, protects private property from theft, and keeps the peace.