# Psychology Notes 10/21/2016

- What is psychological egoism?

A: all humans are selfish in everything that they do, the only motive from which anyone ever acts is self interest.

- What is ethical egoism?

A: We have no obligation ever to do anything except what is in our self interests. Self interest is the ultimate justification for all action

- What is the difference between psychological egoism and ethical egoism?

A: Psychological is what you do, ethical is what you ought to do

- How does Rachels argue against psychological egoism?

A: We voluntarily do things we don't want to do ex) going to the dentist, doctor, work...

- What is cultural relativism?

A: Morality originates in nothing but cultural codes. “They believe it because their culture believes it” The moral code of a society determines what is right within that society.

- What is the cultural differences argument?

A: Cultures treat the dead differently. Objectively no right way to treat the dead. Different cultures have different views of marriage and sex. THe is no objectively right or wrong view on sex and marriage.

- How does Rachels argue against cultural relativism?

A: Different cultures have different moral codes. Right and wrong are only matters of opinion, opinions vary from culture to culture.

- How does Thomson describe the Trolley Case and the Surgeon Case, and how does she describe people’s reactions to them?

A: In both cases, 1 man’s life is sacrificed to save 5 others, however turning the train in the trolley case is seen as morally acceptable while cutting open the man to use his organs is seen as not.

- How is Thomson’s Bystander’s Three Options Case different from the original Trolley Case?

A: In the three option case, the bystander has the option to turn the trolley onto himself, sacrificing himself for the other workers.

- What does Thomson think the Bystander’s Three Options Case shows?

A: That it is morally best to let the trolley kill the five because if you are not willing to turn the trolley on yourself, you can't be the single workman, and put your life over this.

- In what way did Thomson change her mind from “The Trolley Problem” to “Turning the Trolley”?

A: from moving it to the one person to leaving it to kill the 5

- How does Mill define happiness?

A: Mill defines happiness as pleasure and the absence of pain

- What is Mill’s supreme principle of morality?

A: Basically Consequentialism (more specifically Utilitarianism) meaning “an act is right if and only if it produces the best possible consequences”.. “ Actions are right as they tend to promote happiness; wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness”

- What is Mill’s view of different kinds of pleasure?

A: There are higher pleasures and lower pleasures. Higher pleasures are superior in overall quantity.

- Circumstantial advantages

- Permanency

- Safety

- Uncostliness

- What does Mill think of moral rules, such as the rule not to tell a lie?

A: If the lie leads to overall greater happiness, then it is better to tell the lie. Example of catholic mother not knowing if her son committed suicide, and the teacher lies and says her son didnt kill himself, so she does not think he went to hell.

- How does Mill respond to the objection that a person faced with a moral dilemma does not have enough time to calculate all the possible consequences of each alternative?

A: “There has been ample time, namely, the whole past duration of

the human species. during all that time, mankind have been learning by

experience ...the effects of some actions on their happiness; and the beliefs

which have thus come down are the rules of morality...”

In other words, we don’t need to do direct utility calculations in most cases;

we can apply subordinate rules, which are rules of thumb for maximizing

Happiness. WE KNOW BY PAST EXPERIENCE WHAT CAUSES HAPPINESS AND WHAT DOESN'T (basically)

- What is Kant’s view of a good will?

A: What we can control, however, is the will behind the action. That is, we can act according to one law rather than another. The morality of an action, therefore, must be assessed in terms of the motivation behind it.

- What is Kant’s view of moral worth?

A:

- It’s contrary to your duty

- In accord with duty, out of self-interest

- In accord with duty, out of immediate inclination

- From duty

Moral worth does not attach to what you do, but what your will was (if you plan on cheating on a test but don’t because the TA is sitting behind you)

- What is Kant’s view of duty?

A: Acting out of duty is acting in accordance with the demands of law, not for any particular goal. Kant says that a person’s will is only good if they are motivated by duty and nothing else.

- What is Kant’s view of the supreme moral principle?

A: Referred to a “categorical imperative” which determines what our moral duties are.

\*\*Hypothetical Imperatives\*\*: these imperatives command conditionally on your having a relevant desire. E.g. “If you want to go to medical school, study biology in college.” If you don’t want to go to medical school, this command doesn’t apply to you. Another example, your father says, "if you are hungry, then go eat something!" - if you aren't hungry, then you are free to ignore the command.

\*\*Categorical Imperatives\*\*: These commands unconditionally. E.g. “Don’t cheat on your taxes.” Even if you want to cheat and doing so would serve your interests, you may not cheat.

- What duties does Kant discuss?

A: Perfect and Imperfect Duties:

\*Illustration\*

: We have a perfect duty not to murder. This means that we must never murder under any circumstances. We have an imperfect duty to help the needy. This means that we should do so on occasion, where this does not conflict with our perfect duties.