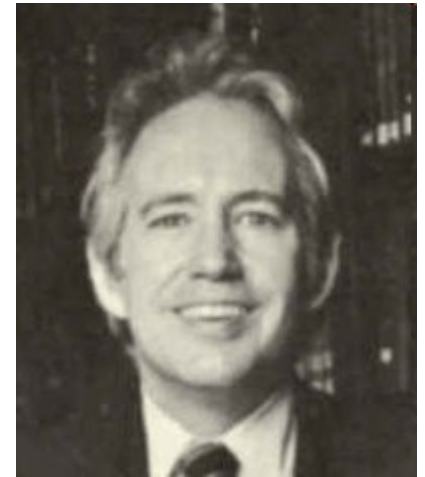# introduction to ethics

Burak Galip ASLAN, PhD

"Science cannot resolve moral conflicts, but it can help to more accurately frame the debates about those conflicts."

Heinz Pagels

(1939 – 1988)

American physicist

3/177

introduction

community, benefits, costs

introduction

responsible community members respect other community members' "core values"

introduction

responsible community members respect other community members' "core values"

moving to the ethical point of view requires a decision that "other people and their core values are also worthy of respect"

introduction

responsible community members respect other
community members' "core values"

moving to the ethical point of view requires a decision
that "other people and their core values are also
worthy of respect"

but there are different ethical theories, then what?

defining terms

society: "Association of people organized under a system of rules designed to advance the good of its members over time."

defining terms

society: "Association of people organized under a system of rules designed to advance the good of its members over time."

cooperation v.s. competence (dividing limited benefits)
*trivial competition -> limited tickets for a premiere
significant competition -> between companies*

defining terms

society: "Association of people organized under a system of rules designed to advance the good of its members over time."

cooperation v.s. competence (dividing limited benefits)
trivial competition -> limited tickets for a premiere
significant competition -> between companies

"Every society has rules of conduct describing what people ought and ought not to do in various situations."

rules -> morality

defining terms

society: "Association of people organized under a system of rules designed to advance the good of its members over time."

cooperation v.s. competence (dividing limited benefits)
trivial competition -> limited tickets for a premiere
significant competition -> between companies

"Every society has rules of conduct describing what people ought and ought not to do in various situations."

rules -> morality

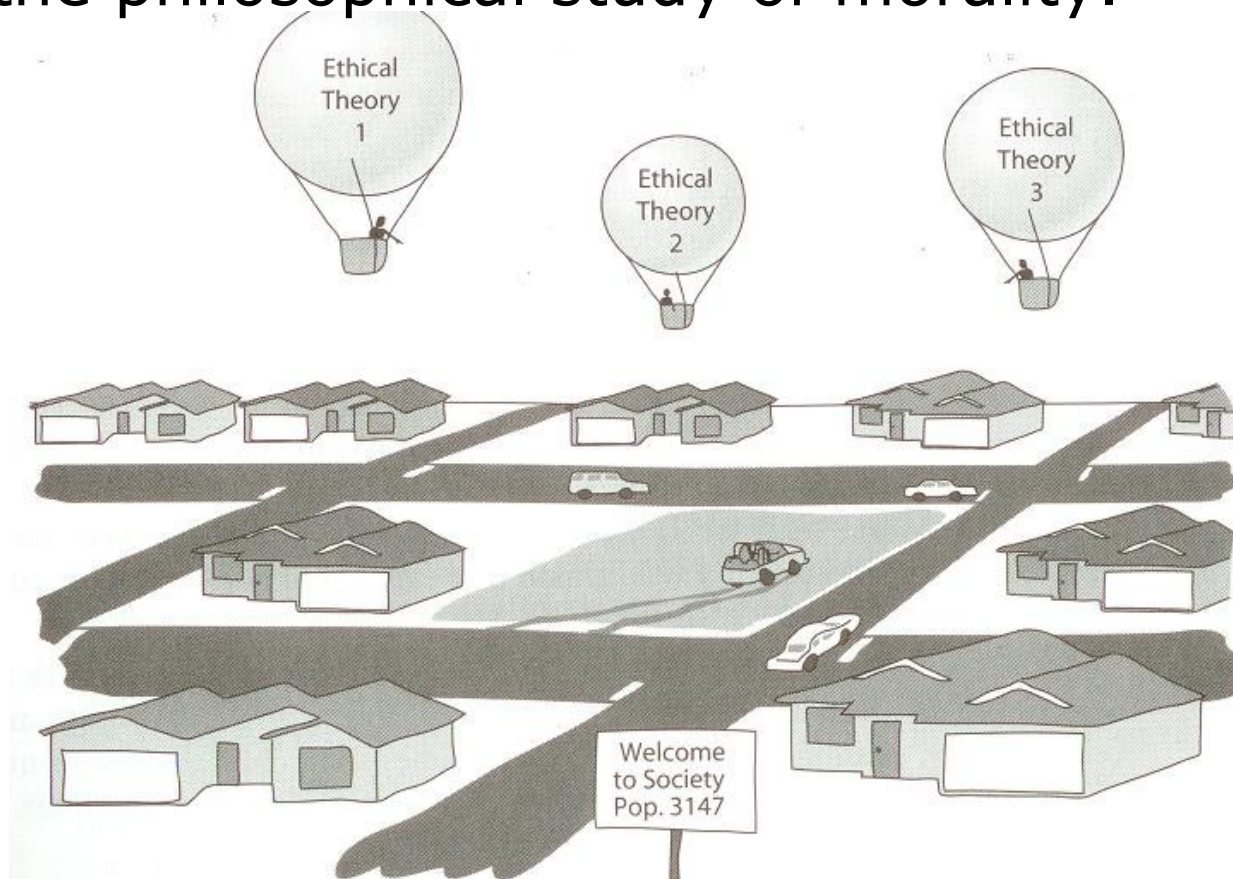multiple society memberships -> moral dilemmas
pacifist (belief) v.s. drafted in army (national law)

defining terms

ethics: the philosophical study of morality.

defining terms

ethics: the philosophical study of morality.

society -> car drivers, morality -> road network, "doing ethics" -> people on balloons – evaluate individual roads (particular moral guidelines), quality of the entire road network (moral system), judge drivers on and off the road (moral or immoral), evaluate various ways of constructing new road networks (alternative moral systems)

defining terms

"There may be a definite solution, but observers will most probably have difficulty on agreement. Because they most probably have different point of views."

defining terms

"There may be a definite solution, but observers will most probably have difficulty on agreement. Because they most probably have different point of views."

changing society -> exploiting (*spam, pop-up*)

What is "good", "neutral" and "bad"?

defining terms

"There may be a definite solution, but observers will most probably have difficulty on agreement. Because they most probably have different point of views."

changing society -> exploiting (*spam, pop-up*)

What is "good", "neutral" and "bad"?

Existing moral guidelines sometimes seem old-fashioned or unclear.

We are left on our "common wisdom" unless we learn how to work through these problems ourselves.

scenarios

1-speeders, East Dakota State Police, sophisticated video cams, +5 Mph, image recognition, license plate number, high res picture of driver, automated speeding ticket by matching with photo evidence, +6 months, speeding reduced by 90%, FBI request real-time access to video cams, +3 months, 5 terrorist organization members arrested (**?**)

scenarios

1-speeders, East Dakota State Police, sophisticated video cams, +5 Mph, image recognition, license plate number, high res picture of driver, automated speeding ticket by matching with photo evidence, +6 months, speeding reduced by 90%, FBI request real-time access to video cams, +3 months, 5 terrorist organization members arrested (**?***)

2-you are senior sw engineer, smartphone sw, sales quotes and customer invoices, next week, bugs, leader report bugs as minor, re-testing requires 1 month, fierce competition in mobile industry, being first, rival company, risk of being left out of business (**?***)

scenarios

How did you decide on "right" or "wrong"?

scenarios

How did you decide on "right" or "wrong"?

Were your answers consistent with each other in both scenarios?

scenarios

How did you decide on "right" or "wrong"?

Were your answers consistent with each other in both scenarios?

Did you use the same methodology in both scenarios?

scenarios

How did you decide on "right" or "wrong"?

Were your answers consistent with each other in both scenarios?

Did you use the same methodology in both scenarios?

If someone disagrees with your point of view, how would you try to convince that person?

ethics

Ethics is the rational, systematic analysis of conduct that can cause benefit or harm to other people.

WHY? <- by reasoning

ethics

Ethics is the rational, systematic analysis of conduct
that can cause benefit or harm to other people.

WHY <- by reasoning

requires the possibility alternatives on people's actions

ethics

Ethics is the rational, systematic analysis of conduct that can cause benefit or harm to other people.

WHY <- by reasoning

requires the possibility alternatives on people's actions

choosing a color for your new car

ethics

Ethics is the rational, systematic analysis of conduct that can cause benefit or harm to other people.

WHY <- by reasoning

requires the possibility alternatives on people's actions

choosing a color for your new car   preference

ethics

Ethics is the rational, systematic analysis of conduct that can cause benefit or harm to other people.

WHY <- by reasoning

requires the possibility alternatives on people's actions

choosing a color for your new car   preference

hitting a pedestrian on the sidewalk with your new red car while trying to steer-off from a pedestrian

ethics

Ethics is the rational, systematic analysis of conduct that can cause benefit or harm to other people.

WHY <- by reasoning

requires the possibility alternatives on people's actions

choosing a color for your new car   preference

hitting a pedestrian on the sidewalk with your new red car while trying to steer-off from a pedestrian

reflex action

ethics

Ethics is the rational, systematic analysis of conduct that can cause benefit or harm to other people.

WHY <- by reasoning

requires the possibility alternatives on people's actions

choosing a color for your new car | preference |

hitting a pedestrian on the sidewalk with your new red car while trying to steer-off from a pedestrian

| reflex action |

what if you were intoxicated while driving

ethics

Ethics is the rational, systematic analysis of conduct that can cause benefit or harm to other people.

WHY <- by reasoning

requires the possibility alternatives on people's actions

choosing a color for your new car preference

hitting a pedestrian on the sidewalk with your new red car while trying to steer-off from a pedestrian

reflex action

what if you were intoxicated while driving **ethics now!**

overview of ethical theories

at least 2400 years back, Socrates, student Plato writes, "Crito", Socrates makes ethical reasoning about why he ought to face unjust death penalty instead of taking an advantage of going exile with family
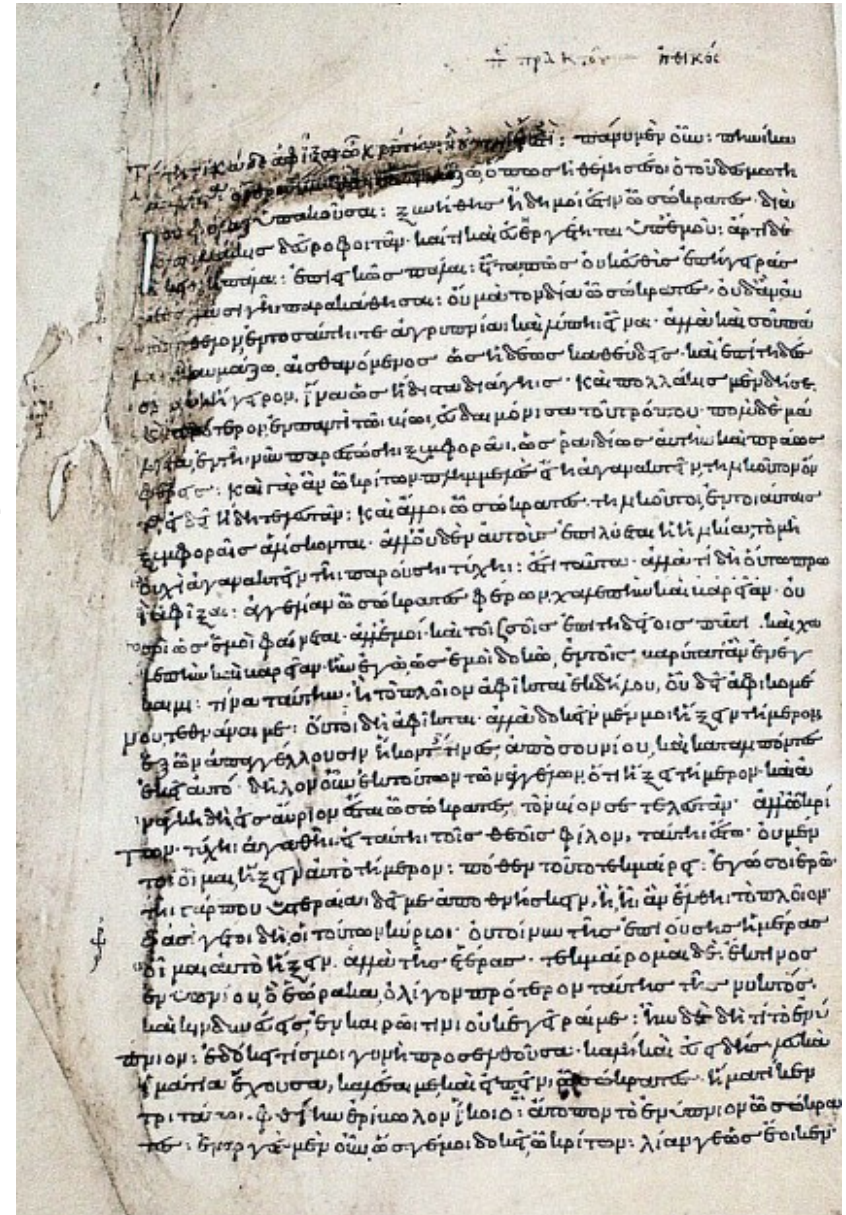
overview of ethical theories

at least 2400 years back, Socrates, student Plato writes, "Crito", Socrates makes ethical reasoning about why he ought to face unjust death penalty instead of taking an advantage of going exile with family

A good ethical theory enables people to affect a diverse audience. (the dialectic method)

WHY?

the case for subjective relativism

no universal moral norms of "right" or "wrong"

"What is right for you may not be right for me."

+ intelligent people can have totally opposite opinions about moral issues (*abortion, euthanasia*)

the case for subjective relativism

no universal moral norms of "right" or "wrong"

"What is right for you may not be right for me."

+ intelligent people can have totally opposite opinions about moral issues (*abortion*)

+ ethical debates are pointless at difficult problems (*abortion, both sides are right*)

the case against subjective relativism

no universal moral norms of "right" or "wrong"

"What is right for you may not be right for me."

- people are good at rationalizing bad behavior

the case against subjective relativism

no universal moral norms of "right" or "wrong"

"What is right for you may not be right for me."

- people are good at rationalizing bad behavior

- no moral distinction (*Adolf Hitler v.s. Mother Teresa*)

"I can decide what is right for me, as long as my actions don't hurt anyone else" extension is inconsistent with subjectivity

the case against subjective relativism

no universal moral norms of "right" or "wrong"

"What is right for you may not be right for me."

- people are good at rationalizing bad behavior

- no moral distinction (*Adolf Hitler v.s. Mother Teresa*)

"I can decide what is right for me, as long as my actions don't hurt anyone else" extension is inconsistent with subjectivity

- subjective relativism can **NOT** be regarded as tolerance (*if you are a tolerant person, what if some people decide to be introlerant?*)

the case against subjective relativism

no universal moral norms of "right" or "wrong"

"What is right for you may not be right for me."

- people are good at rationalizing bad behavior

- no moral distinction (*Adolf Hitler v.s. Mother Teresa*)

"I can decide what is right for me, as long as my actions don't hurt anyone else" extension is inconsistent with subjectivity

- subjective relativism != tolerance (*if you are a tolerant person, what if some people decide to be introlerant?*)

- individuals decide themselves and there is no need for logic and reasoning.

subjective relativism

no universal moral norms of "right" or "wrong"

"What is right for you may not be right for me."

self-defeating at a debate

rejected as a workable ethical theory

cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines
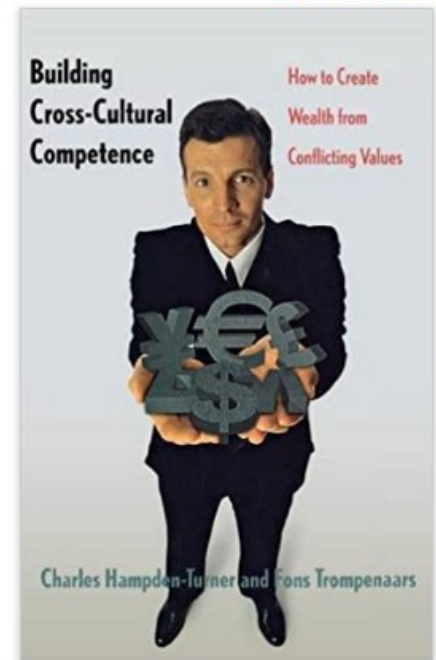

Franz Boas

(1858 – 1942)

German-American anthropologist

cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

Charles Hampden-Turner, Fons Trompenaars, 2000, driving, friend, pedestrian, 35 mph, 20 mph, no other evidence or witness, lawyer asks!

Building Cross-Cultural Competence

How to Create Wealth from Conflicting Values

Charles Hampden-Turner and Fons Trompenaars

cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

Charles Hampden-Turner, Fons Trompenaars, 2000, driving, friend, pedestrian, 35 mph, 20 mph, no other evidence or witness, lawyer asks!

Norwegians, USA, Canada, Mexico, Yugoslavia, Turkey

cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

Charles Hampden-Turner, Fons Trompenaars, 2000, driving, friend, pedestrian, 35 mph, 20 mph, no other evidence or witness, lawyer asks!

Norwegians, USA, Canada, Mexico, Yugoslavia, Turkey

what right has your friend expect you to protect him?

definite right? / **some** right? / **no** right?

cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

Charles Hampden-Turner, Fons Trompenaars, 2000, driving, friend, pedestrian, 35 mph, 20 mph, no other evidence or witness, lawyer asks!

Norwegians, USA, Canada, Mexico, Yugoslavia, Turkey

90%   75% 75%   50%   10%   ?

what right has your friend expect you to protect him?

definite right? / **some** right? / **no** right?

cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

Charles Hampden-Turner, Fons Trompenaars, 2000, driving, friend, pedestrian, 35 mph, 20 mph, no other evidence or witness, lawyer asks!

Norwegians, USA, Canada, Mexico, Yugoslavia, Turkey

90%   75%   75%   50%   10%   ?

what right has your friend expect you to protect him?

definite right? / **some** right? / **no** right?

what if there is another sworn witness?

the case for cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

+ different social contexts demand different moral guidelines (*overpopulation changes even our own point of views, from food stocking -> saving planet*)

the case for cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

+ different social contexts demand different moral guidelines (*overpopulation changes even our own point of views*)

+ it is arrogant for one society to judge another (*could be advanced, but no society is more intelligent than other*)

the case against cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

- what is "right" or "wrong" can be different but point of views can be shared (*drought, solutions, aqueduct, human sacrifice*)

An **aqueduct** is a watercourse constructed to carry water from a source to a distribution point far away. In modern engineering, the term **aqueduct** is used for any system of pipes, ditches, canals, tunnels, and other structures used for this purpose.

en.wikipedia.org › wiki › Aqueduct_(water_supply) ▾
Aqueduct (water supply) - Wikipedia

Human sacrifice

Human sacrifice is the act of killing one or more humans as part of a ritual, usually intended to please or appease gods, spirits or the dead ancestors, such as a propitiatory offerings or as a retainer sacrifice when a king's servants are killed in order for them to continue to serve their master in the next life. Wikipedia

the case against cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

- what is "right" or "wrong" can be different but point of views can be shared (*drought, solutions, aqueduct, human sacrifice*)

- if someone new in society, how to learn? poll? how can the responder explain why? -> laws, but moral values change rapidly, new tech. -> groups in society might disagree (sharing copyrighted music)

the case against cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

- what is "right" or "wrong" can be different but point of views can be shared (*drought, solutions, aqueduct, human sacrifice*)

- if someone new in society, not an individual case, morality -> laws, but moral values change rapidly

- no evolution (*race bias in 1960s, segregance, no obedience, heroes now*)

the case against cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

- what is "right" or "wrong" can be different but point of views can be shared (*drought, solutions, aqueduct, human sacrifice*)

- if someone new in society, not an individual case, morality -> laws, but moral values change rapidly

- no evolution (*race bias in 1960s, segregance, no obedience, heroes now*)

- cultural conflicts remain unsolved (*Israel v.s. Palestine, continuous expansion v.s. only war*)

the case against cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

- judging that many options could be acceptable leads to any option to be acceptable -> to -> many-any fallacy e.g. *"There are many good ways to add comments to a program, but that does not mean that any commenting style is good."*

the case against cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

- many-any fallacy e.g. *"There are many good ways to add comments to a program, but that does not mean that any commenting style is good."*

- societies do share certain core values (*newborn care, telling truth, murder prohobition*) -> **powerful response to relativity context!** starting point for universal ethical theory based on core values

the case against cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

- *"There are many good ways to add comments to a program, but that does not mean that any commenting style is good."*

- societies do share certain core values (*newborn care, telling truth, murder prohobition*)

- indirectly based on reasoning -> *"You behave in a certain way because it's why you're supposed to do, not because it makes sense." (i.e. traditions, know any?)*

cultural relativism

society-based relativism, "right" and "wrong" is based on society's moral guidelines

weakness in ethical persuasion (other societies?)

rejected as a workable ethical theory

divine command theory

3 religions -> single God

good actions -> the will of God (*revere your parents*)

bad actions -> contrary to will of God (*lying, stealing*)

the case against divine command theory

3 religions -> single God

good actions -> the will of God (*revere your parents*)

bad actions -> contrary to will of God (*lying, stealing*)

- many holy books and many teachings disagree with each other

the case against divine command theory

3 religions -> single God

good actions -> the will of God (*revere your parents*)

bad actions -> contrary to will of God (*lying, stealing*)

- many holy books and many teachings disagree with each other

- how about a multi-religion society?

the case against divine command theory

3 religions -> single God

good actions -> the will of God (*revere your parents*)

bad actions -> contrary to will of God (*lying, stealing*)

- many holy books and many teachings disagree with each other

- how about a multi-religion society?

- some moral problems aren't addressed (*Internet*) need analogy -> personal insight of people

the case against divine command theory

3 religions -> single God

good actions -> the will of God (*revere your parents*)

bad actions -> contrary to will of God (*lying, stealing*)

- many holy books and many teachings disagree with each other

- how about a multi-religion society?

- some moral problems aren't addressed (*Internet*) need analogy -> personal insight of people

- no reasoning, pure obedience (abraham/ibrahim, ishmael/ismail or isaac/ishak) v.s. earlier (kabil/habil – cain/abel)

divine command theory

3 religions -> single God

good actions -> the will of God (*revere your parents*)

bad actions -> contrary to will of God (*lying, stealing*)

there is no point in argument if beliefs are different

rejected as a workable ethical theory

ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

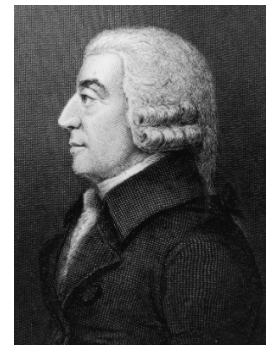based on the principle of "trade" on all grounds

ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

based on the principle of "trade" on all grounds

still can promote assistance, BUT in case of long-term gain (e.g. $100 loan to friend to fix his car)

the case for ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

+ practical -> we only have one life

the case for ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

+ practical -> we only have one life

+ let other people take care of themselves instead of relying on charities -> often a "good-deed" may backfire (*i.e. bırak her koyun kendi bacağından asılsın*)

the case for ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

+ practical -> we only have one life

+ let other people take care of themselves instead of relying on charities -> often a "good-deed" may backfire

+ individuals do best for themselves -> community good (e.g. enterpreneurs -> many jobs)

Everyone pursuing his own self-interest is the best way to promote the general good.
This argument was made famous by Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733) in his poem
"The Fable of the Bees" and by Adam Smith (1723-1790) in his pioneering work on
economics, "The Wealth of Nations."

the case for ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

+ practical -> we only have one life

+ let other people take care of themselves instead of relying on charities -> often a "good-deed" may backfire

+ individuals do best for themselves -> community good

+ all well-known moral principles are inevitably based on ethical egoism e.g. lying, cheating in long-term (?)

the case against ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

- an easy moral philosophy may not be the best moral philosophy -> people do care in short-term benefits e.g. partying vs. college degree (?)

the case against ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

- an easy moral philosophy may not be the best moral philosophy -> people do care in short-term benefits e.g. partying vs. college degree

- we DO know a lot about what is "good" for someone else -> core values, charity leads to independence in fact? (poor family -> education)

the case against ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

- an easy moral philosophy may not be the best moral philosophy -> people do care in short-term benefits e.g. partying vs. college degree

- we DO know a lot about what is "good" for someone else -> core values, charity leads to independence in fact? (poor family -> education)

- self-interest focus can lead to immoral behavior (affluent doctor 25/12) or disadvantage at all (e.g. prisoner's dilemma, also somewhat related to game theory?)

• If you confess and X doesn't, you get six months and he gets 10 years.

• If X confesses and you don't, he gets six months and you get 10 years.

• If you both confess, you both get five years.

• If neither of you confesses, you both get two years.

the case against ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

- an easy moral philosophy may not be the best moral philosophy -> people do care in short-term benefits e.g. partying vs. college degree

- we DO know a lot about what is "good" for someone else -> core values, charity leads to independence in fact? (poor family -> education)

- self-interest focus can lead to immoral behavior (affluent doctor 25/12) or disadvantage at all (e.g. prisoner's dilemma, also somewhat related to game theory?)

- other moral principles are superior (?) (e.g. drowning / wet t-shirt – evaluating benefits?)

the case against ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

- an easy moral philosophy may not be the best moral philosophy -> people do care in short-term benefits e.g. partying vs. college degree

- we DO know a lot about what is "good" for someone else -> core values, charity leads to independence in fact? (poor family -> education)

- self-interest focus can lead to immoral behavior (affluent doctor 25/12) or disadvantage at all (e.g. prisoner's dilemma, also somewhat related to game theory)

- other moral principles are superior (e.g

Framingham Heart Study
Three Generations of Dedication

- several research studies show that people who take the good of others into account live happier lives (e.g. Framingham Heart Study – 5000 people over 20 years study)

ethical egoism

sharp contrast to divine command theory – each person should focus exclusively on his/her self-interest -> behaviors based on maximum long-term benefit

ethical egoism is clearly against ethical point of view that individuals must consider the good of other community members in order to <u>reap the benefits</u> of living in community

Kantianism

entire life East Prusia, professor, university

"People's actions ought to be guided by
    moral laws, and these moral laws are
    universal."

Immanuel Kant

(1724 – 1804)

philosopher

laws are driven from a reasoning process

can explain WHY an action is right or wrong

good will and the categorical imperative

"What is always good without qualification?", intelligence? courage? (*rob a bank*), good will!

good will and the categorical imperative

"What is always good without qualification?", intelligence? courage? (*rob a bank*), good will!

it is good as long as there is «good will» even if the result is harmful

good will and the categorical imperative

"What is always good without qualification?", intelligence? courage? (*rob a bank*), good will!

it is good as long as there is «good will» even if the result is harmful

what we want to do v.s. what we ought to do

(no importance)   (dutifulness) respecting

moral laws

good will and the categorical imperative

"What is always good without qualification?", intelligence? courage? (*rob a bank*), good will!

it is good as long as there is good will but even the result is harmful

what we want to do v.s. what we ought to do

(no importance)   (dutifulness) respecting

        moral laws
moral rule appropriateness? -> categorical imperative

good will and the categorical imperative

Formulation 1: "Act only from moral rules that you can at the same time will to be universal laws

(*promising -> breaking, difficult, everyone?, universalizing, contradiction, no promises, "everyone except myself"*)

good will and the categorical imperative

Formulation 1: "Act only from moral rules that you can at the same time will to be universal laws

(*promising -> breaking, difficult, everyone?, universalizing, contradiction, no promises, "everyone except myself"*)

Formulation 2: "Act so that you always treat both yourself and other people as ends in themselves, and never only as means to an end."

(*8"-to-12" wafer IC, 1 year, need workers, good applicants, out of state, "should I disclose?", wafer production material v.s. rational beings*)

evaluating a scenario using Kantianism

Carla, full-time job, college degree, 2 courses left, a daughter, single, 1 out of 5 hwks, bought web?

u11143045 fotosearch.com

evaluating a scenario using Kantianism

Carla, full-time job, college degree, 2 courses left, a daughter, single, 1 out of 5 hwks, bought web?

the case for Kantianism

+ rational (can use logic to explain WHY behind solutions)

84/177

the case for Kantianism

+ rational (can use logic to explain WHY behind solutions)

+ universal moral guidelines

the case for Kantianism

+ rational (can use logic to explain WHY behind solutions)

+ universal moral guidelines

+ all persons are treated as moral equals

the case against Kantianism

- sometimes no single rule fully characterizes an action (*Douglash Birsch, stealing food for starving children, stealing? caring? saving innocent?*)

the case against Kantianism

- sometimes no single rule fully characterizes an action *(Douglash Birsch, stealing food for starving children, stealing? caring? saving innocent?)*

- there is no way to resolve a conflict between rules, ordering is not possible

the case against Kantianism

- sometimes no single rule fully characterizes an action (*Douglash Birsch, stealing food for starving children, stealing? caring? saving innocent?*)

- there is no way to resolve a conflict between rules, ordering is not possible

- Kantianism allows no exceptions to moral laws, unbending (*mother's hair*)

Kantianism

moral decision making based on logical reasoning from facts and commonly held values

culture neutral and treats all humans as equals

KANTIANISM

act utilitarianism

English philosophers, Jeremy Bentham (1748 – 1832), John Stuart Mill (1806 – 1873)
**action good -> benefits someone
action bad -> hurts someone**

Jeremy Bentham
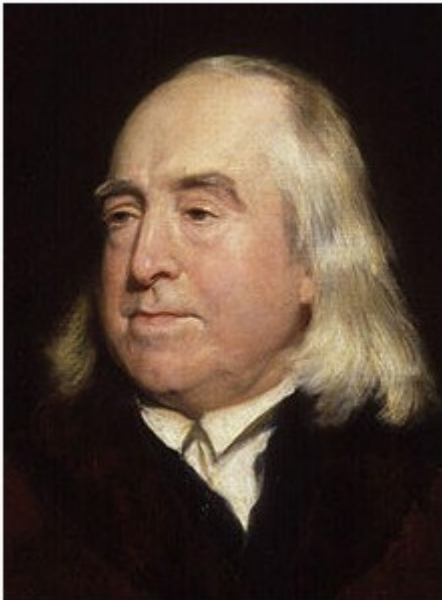
Portrait by Henry William Pickersgill

John Stuart Mill
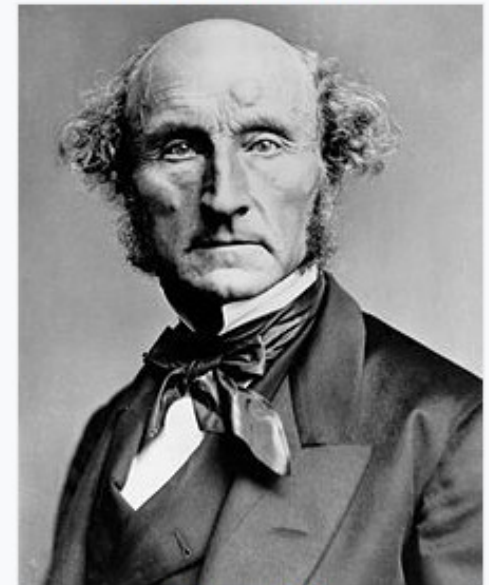
Mill c. 1870

act utilitarianism

English philosophers, Jeremy Bentham (1748 – 1832), John Stuart Mill (1806 – 1873)
action good -> benefits someone
action bad -> hurts someone

principle of utility (greatest happiness principle)

"An action is right (or wrong) to the extent that it increases (or decreases) the total happiness of affected parties."

act utilitarianism

"Utility is the tendency of an object to produce happiness, advantage, benefit, good, pleasure or prevent unhappiness, disadvantage, cost, evil, pain."

act utilitarianism

"Utility is the tendency of an object to produce happiness, advantage, benefit, good, pleasure or prevent unhappiness, disadvantage, cost, evil, pain."
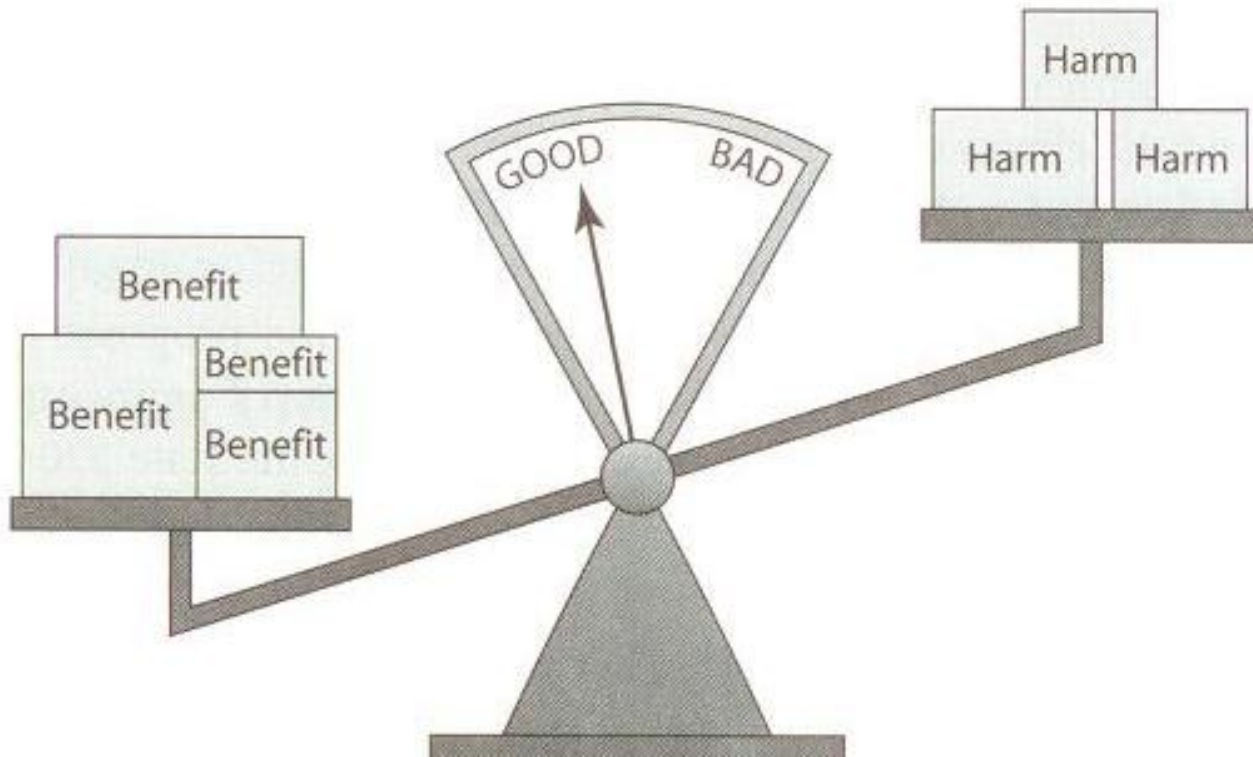
checking grand total

act utilitarianism

Jeremy Bentham: "There is no such thing as any sort of motive that is in itself a bad one. If motives are good or bad, it is only on account of their effects." (no morality of action itself -> consequence of an action)

act utilitarianism

Jeremy Bentham: "There is no such thing as any sort of motive that is in itself a bad one. If motives are good or bad, it is only on account of their effects." (no morality of action itself -> consequence of an action)

consequentalist theory -> utilitarianism

action good (+)

action bad (-)

overall sum

act utilitarianism

Jeremy Bentham: "There is no such thing as any sort of motive that is in itself a bad one. If motives are good or bad, it is only on account of their effects." (no morality of action itself -> consequence of an action)

consequentalist theory -> utilitarianism

action good (+)

action bad (-)

overall sum

"all **beings**" (pain and pleasure) -> also animals

evaluating a scenario using act utilitarianism

outskirt curvy highway, large city, good action?, dollar&cent benefit v.s. cost, 150 houses and $20M condemnment, construction and $10M, lost habitat $1M, total $31M cost, 15000 cars/week, -1 mile shorter, 40 cents/mile, +$6000/week, expected operational lifetime 25 years, total $39M benefit

evaluating a scenario using act utilitarianism

outskirt curvy highway, large city, good action?, dollar&cent benefit v.s. cost, 150 houses and $20M condemnment, construction and $10M, lost habitat $1M, total $31M cost, 15000 cars/week, -1 mile shorter, 40 cents/mile, +$6000/week, expected operational lifetime 25 years, total $39M benefit

good action

evaluating a scenario using act utilitarianism

outskirt curvy highway, large city, good action?, dollar&cent benefit v.s. cost, 150 houses and $20M condemnment, construction and $10M, lost habitat $1M, total $31M cost, 15000 cars/week, -1 mile shorter, 40 cents/mile, +$6000/week, expected operational lifetime 25 years, total $39M benefit

good action

translation is hard -> Bentham: beyond simple benefits and harms, pleasure or pain

translation criteria in act utilitarianism

- intensity: magnitude of experience

- duration: how long the experience lasts

- certainty: probability that it will actually happen

- propinquity: how close the experience is in space and time

- fecundinity: its ability to produce more experiences of the same kind

- purity: extent to which pleasure is not diluted by pain and vice versa

- extent: number of people affected

the case for act utilitarianism

+ it focuses on happiness

the case for act utilitarianism

+ it focuses on happiness

+ it is down-to-earth (more practical than Kant's categorical imperative) (diverse group, collective decision) (*prison building, neighborhood stuff*)

the case for act utilitarianism

+ it focuses on happiness

+ it is down-to-earth (more practical than Kant's categorical imperative) (diverse group, collective decision) (*prison building, neighborhood stuff*)

+ its comprehensive, even in "no brain" solutions (*mother's haircut*)

the case against act utilitarianism

- utilitarian calculus, where to draw the line?

the case against act utilitarianism

- utilitarian calculus, where to draw the line?

- not practical to put so much energy in every moral decision

the case against act utilitarianism

- utilitarian calculus, where to draw the line?

- not practical to put so much energy in every moral decision

- ignores our innate sense of **duty** (*keeping promise, 1000-1001 case*)

107/177

the case against act utilitarianism

- utilitarian calculus, where to draw the line?

- not practical to put so much energy in every moral decision

- ignores our innate sense of **duty** (*keeping promise, 1000-1001 case*)

- susceptible to the problem of **moral luck**, you cannot fully know the consequence (aunt, hospital, flowers, allergy)

act utilitarianism

objective, rational theory to justify what is "right" or "wrong"

KANTIANISM

ACT UTILITARIANISM

rule utilitarianism

John Stuart Mill (1806 – 1873)

"We ought to adopt those moral rules which, if followed by everyone, will lead to the greatest increase in total happiness."

John Stuart Mill

Mill c. 1870
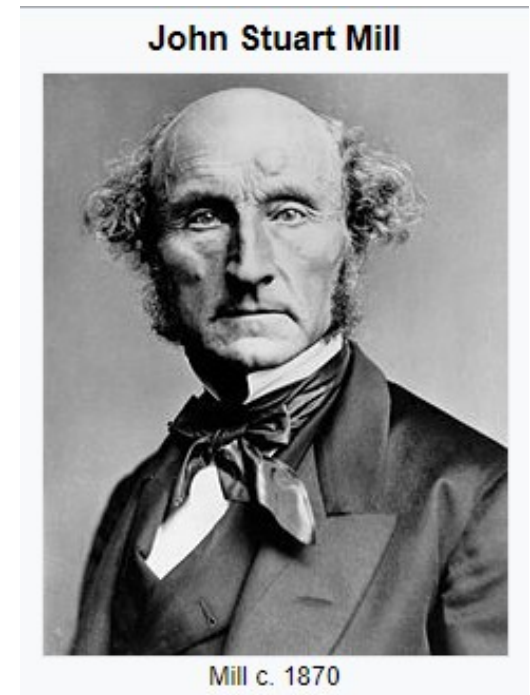
rule utilitarianism

John Stuart Mill (1806 – 1873)

"We ought to adopt those moral rules which, if followed by everyone, will lead to the greatest increase in total happiness."

rule -> universal adoption -> great happiness (still consequence of actions)

evaluating a scenario using rule utilitarianism

*August 2003, **Blaster** worm, security hole, windows, reboot every few mins, **Nachi** worm, if security hole -> destroy blaster & apply patch from Microsoft*

evaluating a scenario using rule utilitarianism

*August 2003, **Blaster** worm, security hole, windows, reboot every few mins, **Nachi** worm, if security hole -> destroy blaster & apply patch from Microsoft*

bad worm -> release another worm (universal principle)

evaluating a scenario using rule utilitarianism

*August 2003, **Blaster** worm, security hole, windows, reboot every few mins, **Nachi** worm, if security hole -> destroy blaster & apply patch from Microsoft*

bad worm -> release another worm (universal principle)

2 ATM machines disabled, two financial centers, (reduce usefulness of Internet with traffic)

evaluating a scenario using rule utilitarianism

*August 2003, **Blaster** worm, security hole, windows, reboot every few mins, **Nachi** worm, if security hole -> destroy blaster & apply patch from Microsoft*

bad worm -> release another worm (universal principle)

2 ATM machines disabled, two financial centers, (reduce usefulness of Internet with traffic)

- bugs in benevolent worms?

- admin burden, new worm (harmful? beneficial?)

evaluating a scenario using rule utilitarianism

*August 2003, **Blaster** worm, security hole, windows, reboot every few mins, **Nachi** worm, if security hole -> destroy blaster & apply patch from Microsoft*

bad worm -> release another worm (universal principle)

2 ATM machines disabled, two financial centers, (reduce usefulness of Internet with traffic)

- bugs in benevolent worms?

- admin burden, new worm (harmful? beneficial?)

balance isn't in favor, Nachi wrong

evaluating another scenario using rule utilitarianism

Who should get the kidney machine?

M J Langford

Abstract

This paper considers the problem that arises when the number of patients who need a resource exceeds the supply. An initial decision-making model is proposed that uses two essential criteria, medical prognosis and the priority of life-threatening situations. The model is then subjected to the criticism that it is grotesque to ignore questions relating to the value of, for example, a productive mother over against an aged recluse, and to treat them as having equal rights to access. It is argued that this criticism need not be an expression of prejudice but may reflect a defendable view in which utilitarian considerations enter into the selection process provided that certain fundamental, or 'deontological' rights are observed for all. In the light of the discussion the model is modified in order to contain both a non-utilitarian feature that stresses the intrinsic importance of all persons, and a utilitarian feature that can allow one, in certain circumstances, to take consequences into account, especially those that follow from the 'irreplaceability' of some people.

the case for rule utilitarianism

+ rule utilitarian calculus is simpler than act utilitarian calculus (general terms and long-term consequences)

the case for rule utilitarianism

+ rule utilitarian calculus is simpler than act utilitarian calculus (general terms and long-term consequences)

+ not every moral rule requires utilitarian calculus

the case for rule utilitarianism

+ rule utilitarian calculus is simpler than act utilitarian calculus (general terms and long-term consequences)

+ not every moral rule requires utilitarian calculus

+ exceptional situations do not overthrow moral rules (*promise, 1000-1001 case*)

the case for rule utilitarianism

+ rule utilitarian calculus is simpler than act utilitarian calculus (general terms and long-term consequences)

+ not every moral rule requires utilitarian calculus

+ exceptional situations do not overthrow moral rules (*promise, 1000-1001 case*)

+ focus on "typical" results (*sending flowers good*)

the case for rule utilitarianism

+ rule utilitarian calculus is simpler than act utilitarian calculus (general terms and long-term consequences)

+ not every moral rule requires utilitarian calculus

+ exceptional situations do not overthrow moral rules (*promise, 1000-1001 case*)

+ focus on "typical" results (*sending flowers good*)

+ it appeals to a wide cross-section of society (what if everyone does that?)

the case against utilitarianism in general

- single scale for calculation (*adding up apples and oranges*), transformation problem (*road construction, 15 divorces, court costs OK, what about splitting itself in dollar?*)

the case against utilitarianism in general

- single scale for calculation (*adding up apples and oranges*), transformation problem (*road construction, 15 divorces, court costs OK, what about splitting itself in dollar?*)

- ignoring the unjust distribution of good consequences (*everyone get 100 worse than one get nothing and one get 201*)

the case against utilitarianism in general

- single scale for calculation (*adding up apples and oranges*), transformation problem (*road construction, 15 divorces, court costs OK, what about splitting itself in dollar?*)

- ignoring the unjust distribution of good consequences (*everyone get 100 worse than one get nothing and one get 201*)

possible response:

1) "We should act so that the greatest amount of good is produced"

2) "We should distribute good as widely as possible."

conflict in general + not pure utilitarianism anymore (resolving conflicts -> principle of justice)

rule utilitarianism

treating people equally, explaining WHY "right" or "wrong"

RULE UTILITARIANISM

KANTIANISM

ACT UTILITARIANISM

social contract theory

Spring 2003, US, Iraq, surrender, no police, looting armories, shops selling AK-47, thieves, "Are Iraqis much different people or is it just typical response of humans when there is a lack of governmental authority and control?"

social contract theory

Spring 2003, US, Iraq, surrender, no police, looting armories, shops selling AK-47, thieves, "Are Iraqis much different people or is it just typical response of humans when there is a lack of governmental authority and control?"
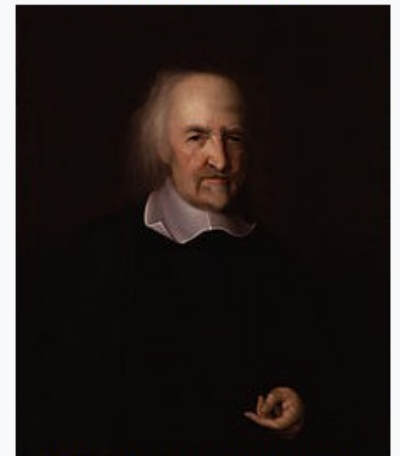
philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679), English civil war, social anarchy, essentiality of cooperation, "Leviathan"

Leviathan

rontispiece of *Leviathan* by Abraham Bosse, with input from Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes

Hobbes by John Michael Wright

social contract theory

Spring 2003, US, Iraq, surrender, no police, looting armories, shops selling AK-47, thieves, "Are Iraqis much different people or is it just typical response of humans when there is a lack of governmental authority and control?"

philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679), English civil war, social anarchy, essentiality of cooperation, "Leviathan"

social contract:

1-the establishment of a set of rules to govern relations among citizens

2-a government capable of enforcing these rules

social contract theory

Franco-Swiss philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778) expanded, "The Social Contract"

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Rousseau by Maurice Quentin de La Tour, 1753
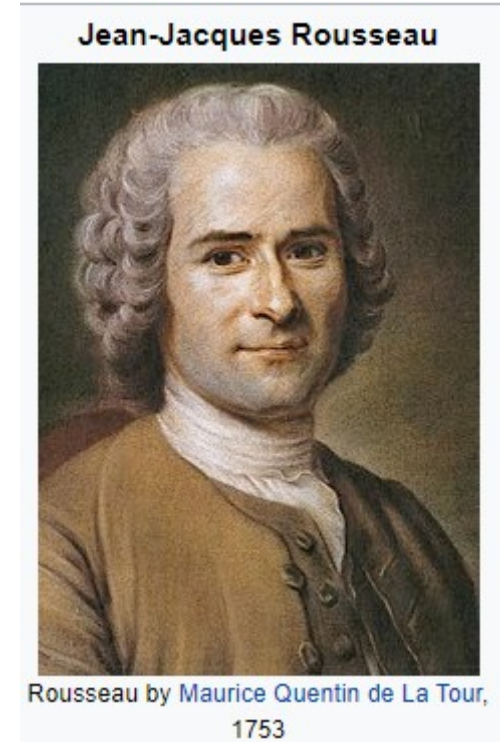
social contract theory

Franco-Swiss philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778) expanded, "The Social Contract"

"Since no man has any natural authority over his fellows, and since force alone bestows no right, all legitimate authority among men must be based on covenants."

social contract theory

Franco-Swiss philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778) expanded, "The Social Contract"

"Since no man has any natural authority over his fellows, and since force alone bestows no right, all legitimate authority among men must be based on covenants."

Bill, 10000 tax, cheat, 8000 payment, 2000, negligible for govt, a lot for Bill, what restrains Bill?

social contract theory

Franco-Swiss philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778) expanded, "The Social Contract"

"Since no man has any natural authority over his fellows, and since force alone bestows no right, all legitimate authority among men must be based on covenants."

Bill, 10000 tax, cheat, 8000 payment, 2000, negligible for govt, a lot for Bill, what restrains Bill?

not only a system of laws, but a system of <u>enforcing</u> law as well (punishment)

social contract theory

social contract theory:

"Morality consists in the set of rules, governing how people are to treat one another, that rational people will agree to accept, for their mutual benefit, on the condition that others follow those rules as well."

social contract theory

social contract theory:

"Morality consists in the set of rules, governing how people are to treat one another, that rational people will agree to accept, for their mutual benefit, on the condition that others follow those rules as well."

Kantianism & social contract theory:

there are universal rules that can be deriven from a rational process

Kant -> if it can be universalized

SCT -> if it is accepted collectively and has benefits to community

social contract theory

Hobbes, Locke, etc. -> life, liberty, property + privacy

social contract theory

Hobbes, Locke, etc. -> life, liberty, property + privacy

people's rights -> duties on other people

negative right -> freedom of speech (absolute right)

positive right -> the right for free education, free
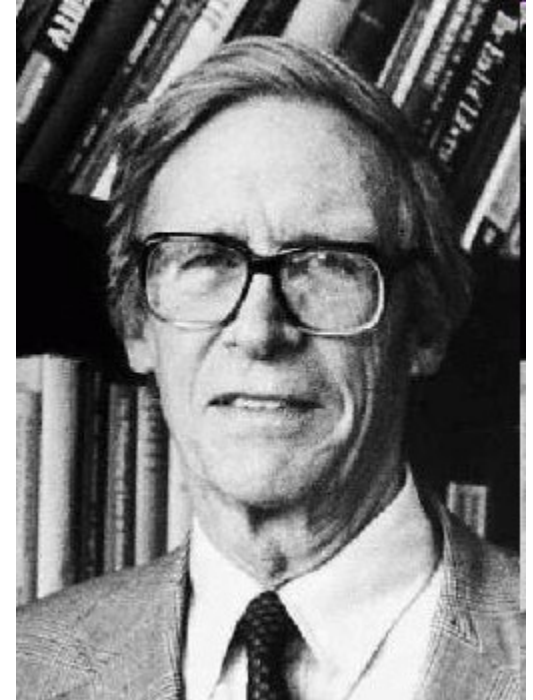   health etc. (limited right) *budget constraints*

Rawls's theory of justice

American philosopher John Rawls (1921 – 2002) dealt with unequality

+ utilitarianism distribution problem

Jean-Jacques Rousseau:

"The social state is advantageous to men only when all possess something and none has too much."

John Rawls's principles of justice

1-Each person may claim a "fully adequate" right as long as it is consistent with everyone else's claims.

John Rawls's principles of justice

1-Each person may claim a "fully adequate" right as long as it is consistent with everyone else's claims.

2-Any social or economic equality must satisfy two conditions:

- positions in society, everyone has fair and equal opportunity to assume

- "to be the greatest benefit of the least-advantaged members of society (the difference principle) (*catch-up logic*)
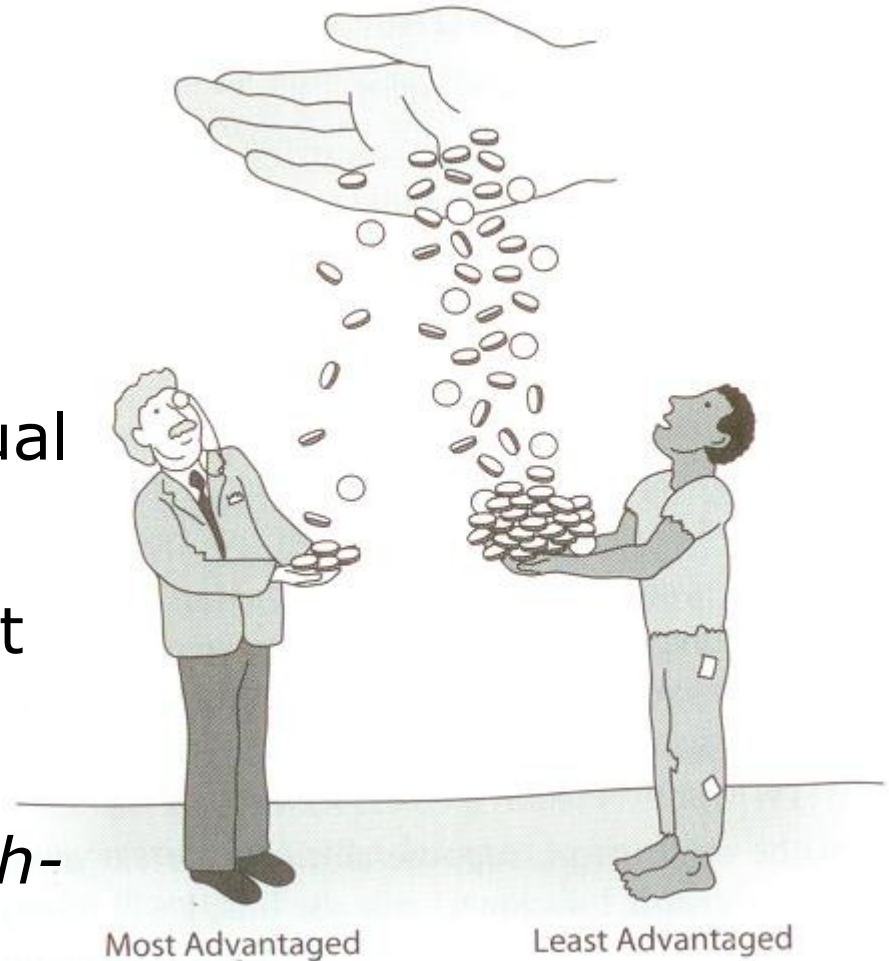
Most Advantaged   Least Advantaged

the case for social contract theory

+ it is framed in the language of rights (individualism, western)

+ it explains why rational people act out of self-interest in the absence of a common agreement (*gasoline shortage, bus 2 days/week, 1-noone bus, 2-everyone bus, "unfortunately everyone in the town logically reaches the same conclusion"*

the case for social contract theory

+ it is framed in the language of rights (individualism, western)

+ it explains why rational people act out of self-interest in the absence of a common agreement (*gasoline shortage, bus 2 days/week, 1-noone bus, 2-everyone bus, "unfortunately everyone in the town logically reaches the same conclusion",*

punishment -> OK, self-interest v.s. common good -> cooperation (selfish suffer negative consequences))

142/177

the case for social contract theory

+ it provides clear ethical analysis of some important moral issues regarding the relationship between people and government (*punishment -> putting into jail burden, Feb.1.1960, counter sit-in, North Carolina, segregation, Woolworth's store, white-only, 4 afro-american, then 85 people, social contract theory agrees that everyone receive certain benefits in return of certain burdens*)

the case against social contract theory

- none of us signed the social contract, hypotethical - > they are what reasonable people "could or would agree to, not what they have agreed to"

non-historical, they do not suppose the agreement as ever, or indeed ever could actually be entered to

moral guidelines are supposed to be the result of analysis, not history; social contract theory is **<u>not</u>** cultural relativism in disguise

the case against social contract theory

- none of us signed the social contract, hypotethical -> they are what reasonable people "could or would agree to, not what they have agreed to"

non-historical, they do not suppose the agreement as ever, or indeed ever could actually be entered to

moral guidelines are supposed to be the result of analysis, not history; social contract theory is **not** cultural relativism in disguise

- some actions can be characterized in multiple ways (just like Kant) characterization situation, rules, rights

the case against social contract theory

- it does not explain how to solve a moral problem when the analysis reveals conflicting rights (Kant), *abortion, mother's right to privacy, fetus's right to life*

the case against social contract theory

- it does not explain how to solve a moral problem when the analysis reveals conflicting rights (Kant), *abortion, mother's right to privacy, fetus's right to live*

- it may be unjust to those people who are incapable of upholding their side of contract, deliberately breaking the rule? incapable of understanding the rule? different, again hard issue (*drug addicts stealing for drug, criminal? -> prison, mentally ill? -> hospital*)

comparing workable ethical theories

legal, analytical, WHY

SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY

objectivism

ethical decision making by logical reasoning on facts and commonly held values

RULE UTILITARIANISM

KANTIANISM

ACT UTILITARIANISM

comparing workable ethical theories

1-faced with a moral problem, what is the motivation for taking a particular action?

2-what criteria are used to determine if an action is ethical or unethical? (rules or actions?)

3-is the focus on the individual or the group?

comparing workable ethical theories

1-faced with a moral problem, what is the motivation for taking a particular action?

2-what criteria are used to determine if an action is ethical or unethical? (rules or actions?)

3-is the focus on the individual or the group?

Theory	Motivation	Criteria	Focus
Kantianism			
Act Utilitarianism			
Rule Utilitarianism			
Social Contract			

comparing workable ethical theories

1-faced with a moral problem, what is the motivation for taking a particular action?

2-what criteria are used to determine if an action is ethical or unethical? (rules or actions?)

3-is the focus on the individual or the group?

Theory	Motivation	Criteria	Focus
Kantianism	Dutifulness	Rules	Individual
Act Utilitarianism	Consequence	Actions	Group
Rule Utilitarianism	Consequence/Duty	Rules	Group
Social Contract	Rights	Rules	Individual

comparing workable ethical theories

FIGURE 2.9 Comparison of four workable ethical theories. All of these theories explicitly
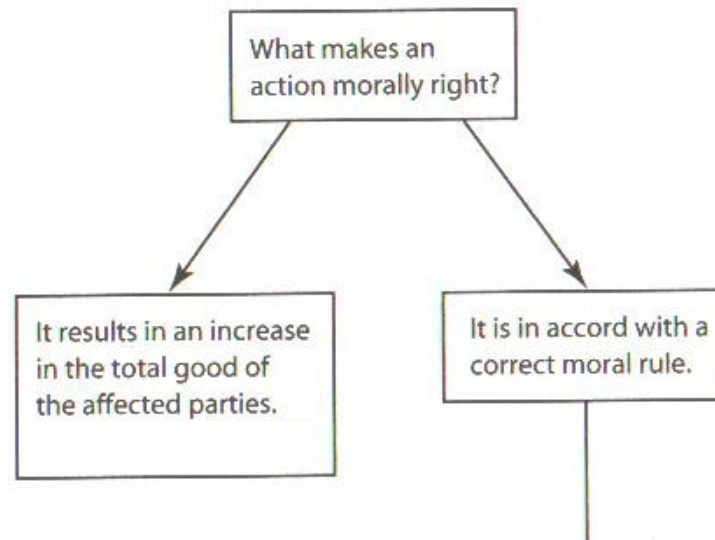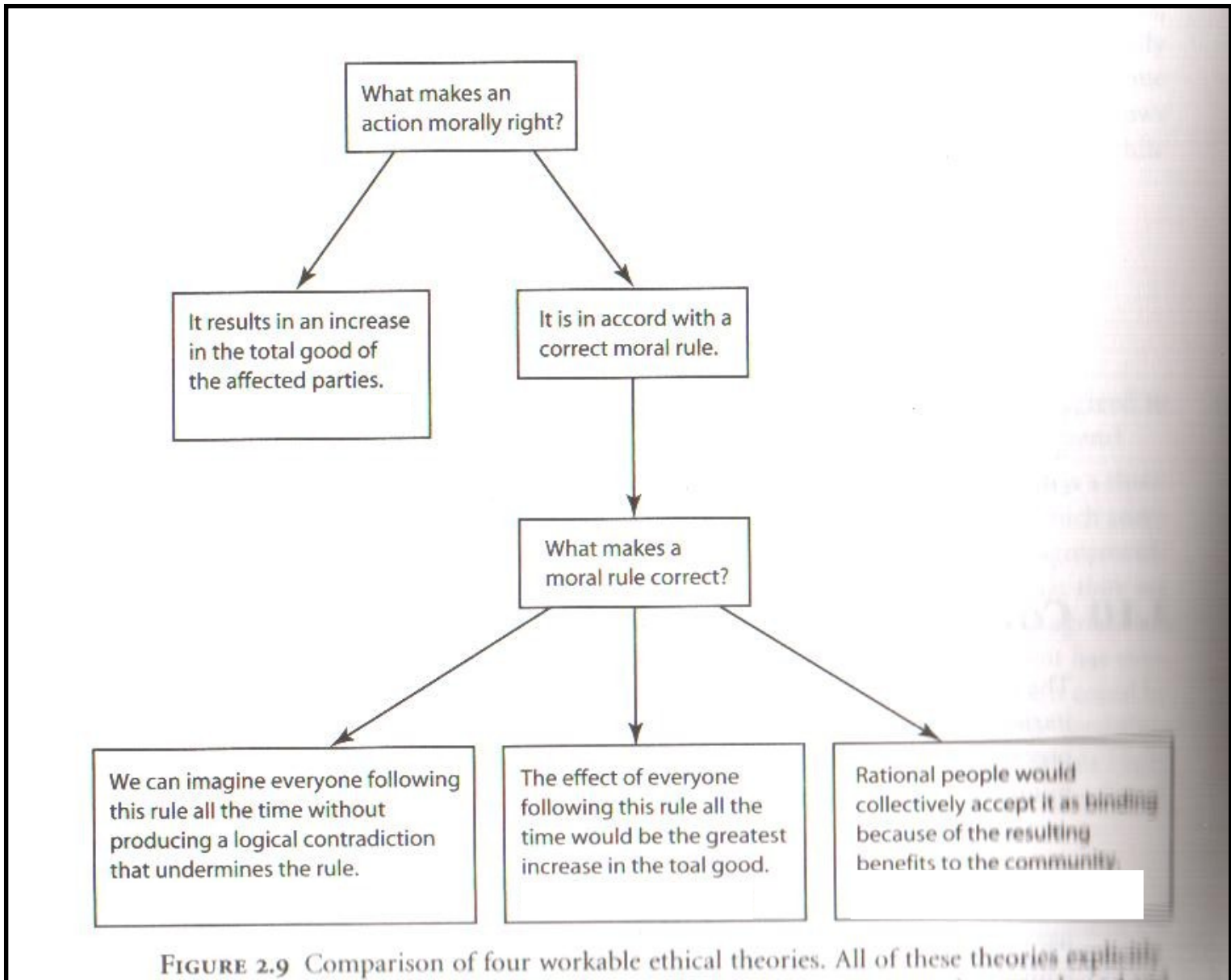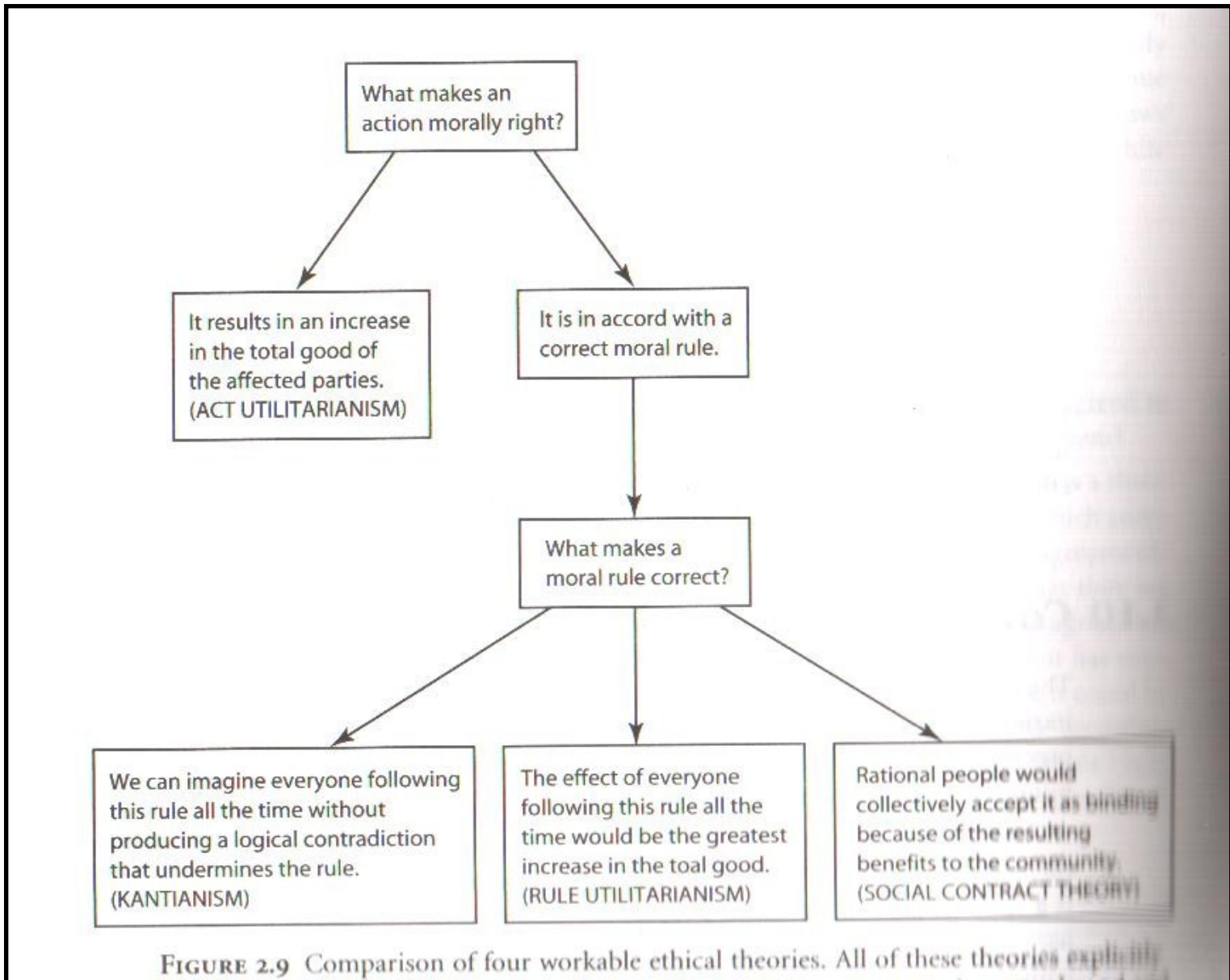
FIGURE 2.9 Comparison of four workable ethical theories. All of these theories explicitly

comparing workable ethical theories

What makes an action morally right?

- It results in an increase in the total good of the affected parties. (ACT UTILITARIANISM)
- It is in accord with a correct moral rule.

What makes a moral rule correct?

- We can imagine everyone following this rule all the time without producing a logical contradiction that undermines the rule. (KANTIANISM)
- The effect of everyone following this rule all the time would be the greatest increase in the toal good. (RULE UTILITARIANISM)
- Rational people would collectively accept it as binding because of the resulting benefits to the community. (SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY)

FIGURE 2.9 Comparison of four workable ethical theories. All of these theories explicitly

morality of breaking the law

what is moral may **NOT** be what is legal

morality of breaking the law

what is moral != what is legal

both possible

wrong action -> legal

right action -> illegal

morality of breaking the law

what is moral != what is legal

both possible

wrong action -> legal

right action -> illegal

copying copyrighted music

sct

morality of breaking the law

what is moral != what is legal

both possible

wrong action -> legal

right action -> illegal

copying copyrighted music

sct, law, violate legal rights, copyright owner

Kant

morality of breaking the law

what is moral != what is legal

both possible

wrong action -> legal

right action -> illegal

copying copyrighted music

sct, law, violate legal rights, copyright owner

Kant, "I may ignore a law that I believe unjust", universal, means to an end

rule u.

morality of breaking the law

what is moral != what is legal

both possible

wrong action -> legal

right action -> illegal

copying copyrighted music

sct, law, violate legal rights, copyright owner

Kant, "I may ignore a law that I believe unjust", universal, means to an end

rule u., lawless harms, no respect for laws

act u.

morality of breaking the law

what is moral != what is legal

both possible

wrong action -> legal

right action -> illegal

copying copyrighted music

sct, law, violate legal rights, copyright owner

Kant, "I may ignore a law that I believe unjust", universal, means to an end

rule u., lawless harms, no respect for laws

act u., *friend, automobile accident, no money, like music, fundraisers, not enough money, copy file, grateful, no lost sale, recommend sale+, no extra cost on illegality, only copyright owner, benefit > cost*

morality of breaking the law

Copying copyrighted music is **immoral because it is <u>illegal</u>**.

morality of breaking the law

"A **blanket prohobition** against copying copyrighted music <u>cannot be morally justified</u> from an **act utilitarian** point of view.", many specific cases

In-app purchases account for **48.2%** of mobile app earnings as compared to **14%** from ads-based revenue and **37.8%** from paid app downloads

In-app purchases	Ads-based revenue	Paid app downloads
48.2%	14%	37.8%

Estimated average In-App Purchase per User

iPhone	Android
$1.0	$0.43

analogical reasoning and computer ethics

useful in case of ethical dilemmas; analyze such situations with their similar in the absence of that specific technology, then examine whether the absence of technology makes any difference

helps us to visualize and make it more clear when we're deeply immersed in discussed technology

analogical reasoning and computer ethics

useful in case of ethical dilemmas; analyze such situations with their similar in the absence of that specific technology, then examine whether the absence of technology makes any difference

helps us to visualize and make it more clear when we're deeply immersed in discussed technology

e.g.1 hacker unauthorized access (files)

analogical reasoning and computer ethics

useful in case of ethical dilemmas; analyze such situations with their similar in the absence of that specific technology, then examine whether the absence of technology makes any difference

helps us to visualize and make it more clear when we're deeply immersed in discussed technology

e.g.1 hacker unauthorized access (files)

e.g.2 hacker unauthorized access (for practice)

any difference?

analogical reasoning and computer ethics

useful in case of ethical dilemmas; analyze such
  situations with their similar in the absence of that
  specific technology, then examine whether the
  absence of technology makes any difference

Eugene H. Spafford
Professor of Computer Science
Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering (courtesy)
Professor of Communication (courtesy)
Professor of Philosophy (courtesy)
Professor of Political Science (courtesy)
Executive Director Emeritus, Purdue CERIAS

Eugene Spafford's critisism (1992) -> spreading
  computer virus on the Internet for sake of
  testing = setting fire in a shopping mall for
  the sake of testing fire protection system
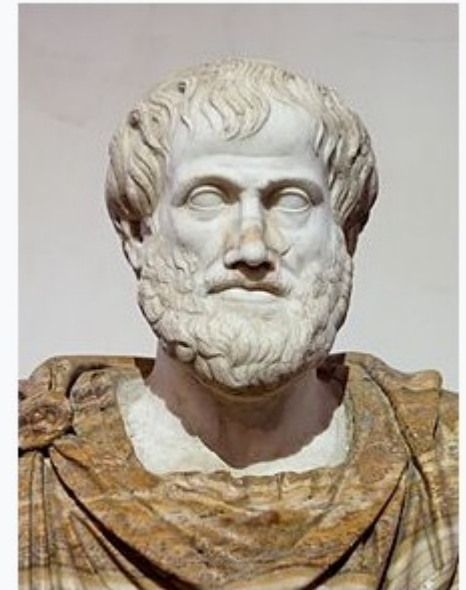
virtue ethics

what is a good person? and what are the virtues associated with being a good person? (goes back to Plato and Aristotle)

Plato
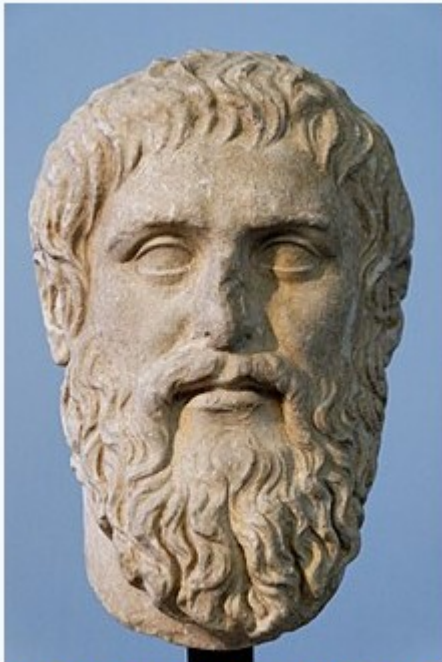
Roman copy of a portrait bust by Silanion for the Academia in Athens (c. 370 BC)

Aristotle

Roman copy in marble of a Greek bronze bust of Aristotle by Lysippos, c. 330 BC, with modern alabaster mantle

virtue ethics

what is a good person? and what are the virtues associated with being a good person? (goes back to Plato and Aristotle)

courage? benevolence? generosity? honesty? tolerance? self-control? and so on…

virtue ethics

what is a good person? and what are the virtues associated with being a good person? (goes back to Plato and Aristotle)

courage? benevolence? generosity? honesty? tolerance? self-control? and so on…

for example if **courage** is ok, then there should be a consensus on the definition of courage or the answer to the question: **what is courage?** *(somewhat similar to sorting out conceptual muddles in the standard account maybe)*

virtue ethics

what is a good person? and what are the virtues associated with being a good person? (goes back to Plato and Aristotle)

courage? benevolence? generosity? honesty? tolerance? self-control? and so on…

for example if **courage** is ok, then there should be a consensus on the definition of courage or the answer to the question: **what is courage?** *(somewhat similar to sorting out conceptual muddles in the standard account maybe)*

if there is an agreement on the set of virtues, then these will be the characters we try to develop in ourselves and in our children
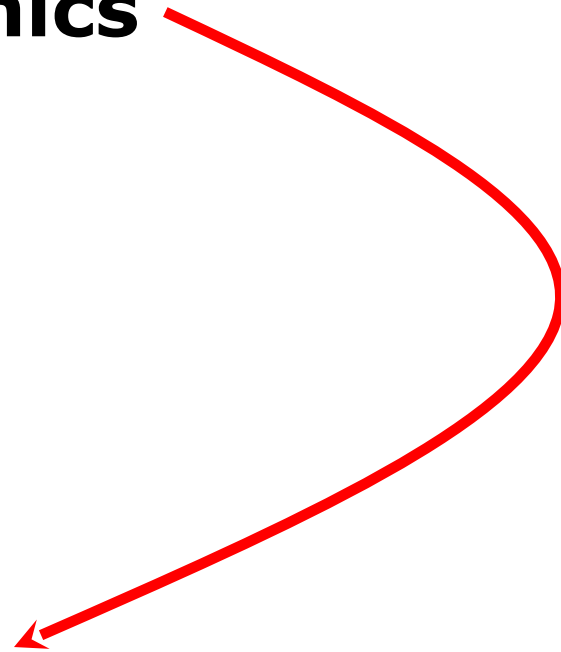
virtue ethics

Consequentialism focuses on consequences of actions.

Deontology focuses on duties.

Virtue Ethics focus on character.

Buzzle.com

virtue ethics

Consequentialism — focuses on consequences of actions.

Deontology — focuses on duties.

Virtue Ethics — focus on character.

Buzzle.com

Computer professionals

virtue ethics

Consequentialism focuses on consequences of actions.

Deontology focuses on duties.

Virtue Ethics focus on character.

Buzzle.com
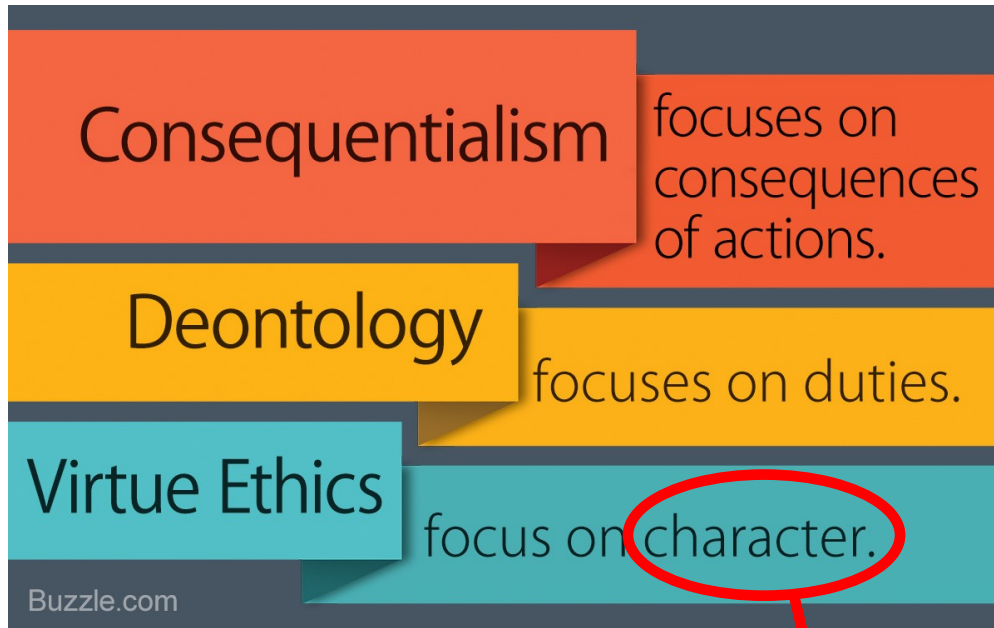
Computer professionals
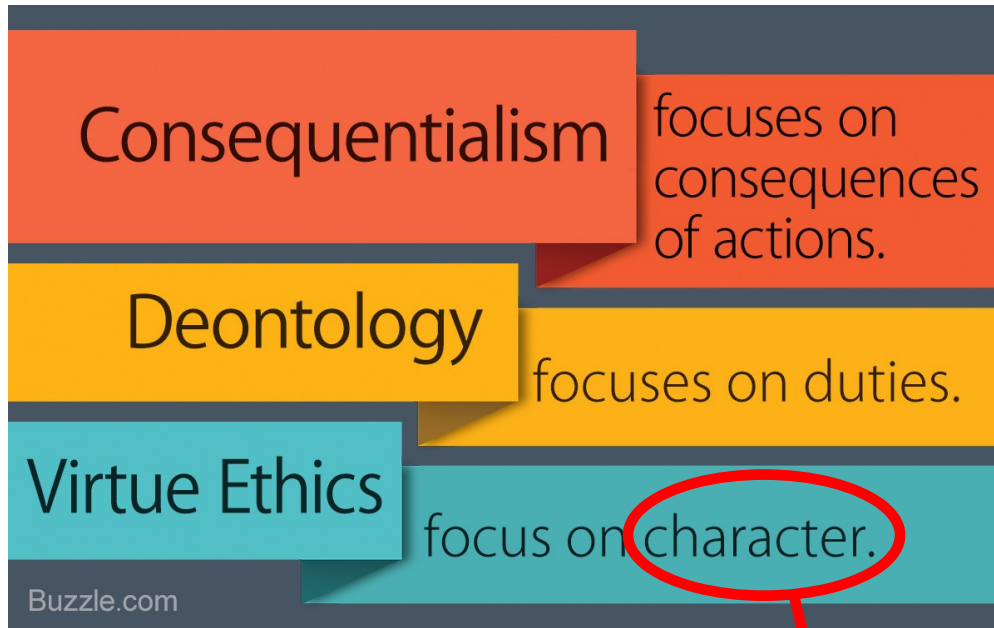
much more to discuss in "professional ethics in computing" section

summary

toolbox of ethical theories

summary

toolbox of ethical theories

Professor Emeritus of Computer Science, Stanford University
Gates Computer Science 3B, Room 388
Stanford CA 94305-9035
Phone (650) 723-2780
winograd@cs.stanford.edu

Office hours by arrangement - please email me directly. See cu

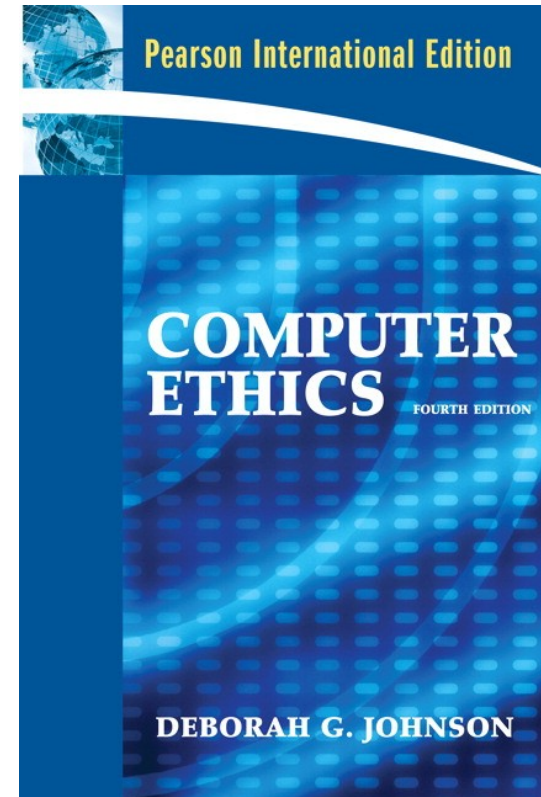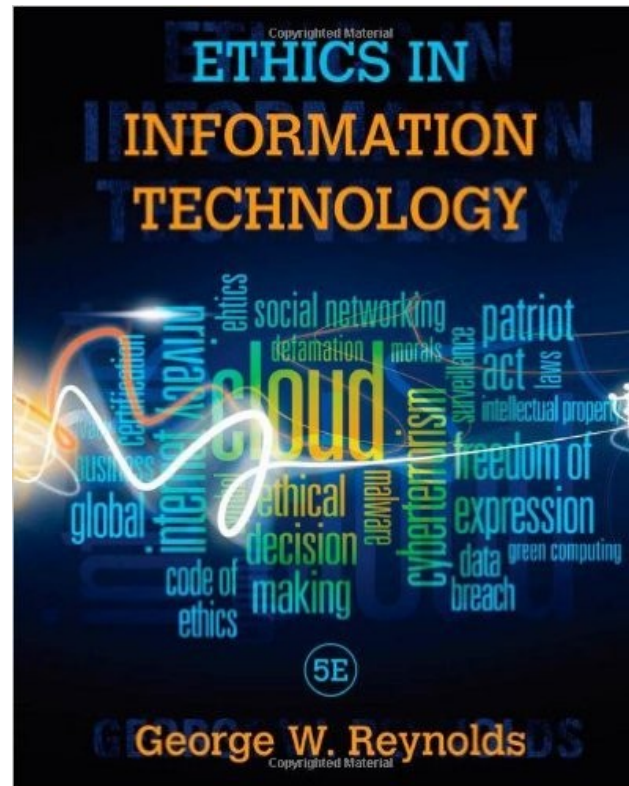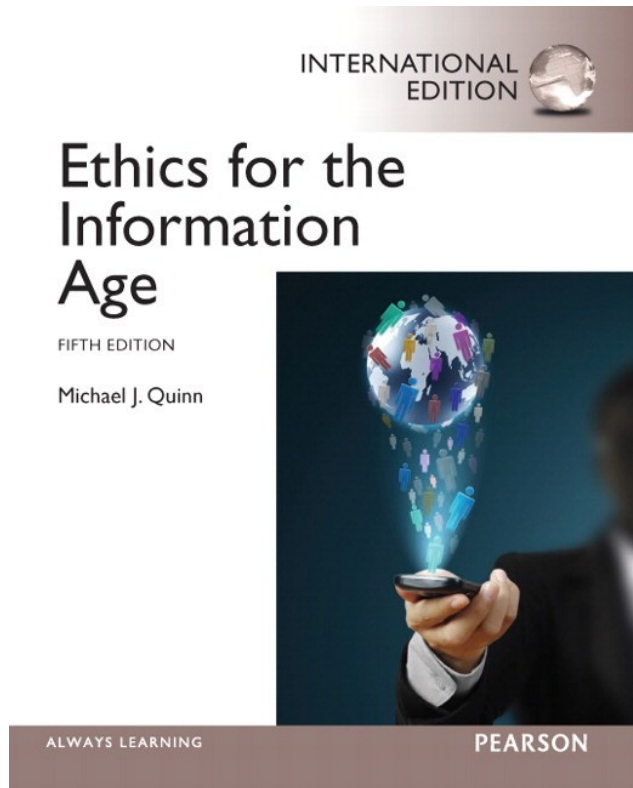For administrative issues, contact Jillian Lentz - jillian.l

"doing ethics" for "doing the right thing" in very limited time, Terry Vinograd

exercise

history class, quiz on the web, a-submit own work, b-open notes and textbook, c-at least 80% required to pass, retake if not successful, Mary, John, next to each other in comp. lab., John asks Mary help, "What is the difference if you tell me the answer, I look it up in the book, or I find out from the computer that my answer is wrong and retake the quiz? In any case, I'll end up getting the credit for the right answer.", Mary tells John the correct answer, discuss the morality of Mary's decision.

references