

CHAPTER IV

FRAMEWORKS AND PRINCIPLES BEHIND OUR MORAL DISPOSITION

INTRODUCTION

A person's moral disposition must be based on frameworks and principles in Ethics. According to Gallinero, making ethical decisions requires sensitivity to the ethical implications of problems and situations; and likewise requires practice (Gallinero, 2018).

BASIC THEORIES AND FRAMEWORKS IN ETHICS

THREE MAIN AREAS OF THE STUDY OF ETHICS OR MORALITY TODAY

THREE MAIN AREAS OF THE STUDY OF ETHICS OR MORALITY TODAY

1) meta-ethics

Meta-ethics is the branch of ethics that studies the fundamental philosophical questions about the nature of ethical theory itself.

2) normative ethics

Normative Ethics is the study of what makes actions right or wrong, what makes situations or events good or bad and what makes people virtuous or vicious

3) applied ethics

Applied Ethics philosophically examines the difficult and controversial moral issues actual people face in their lives

THREE MAIN AREAS OF THE STUDY OF ETHICS OR MORALITY TODAY

1) meta-ethics

- A. Cognitivism and Non-cognitivism**
- B. Subjectivism and Objectivism**

2) normative ethics

- A. Deontology**
- B. Teleology**
 - a) Utilitarianism
- C. Virtue Ethics**

3) applied ethics

- A. Bioethics**
- B. Human Sexual Ethics**
- C. Environmental Ethics**
- D. Business Ethics**
- E. Social Ethics**

COGNITIVISM AND NON-COGNITIVISM

Cognitivism, In [metaethics](#), the thesis that the function of [moral](#) sentences (e.g., sentences in which moral terms such as “right,” “wrong,” and “ought” are used) is to describe a domain of moral facts existing independently of our subjective thoughts and feelings, and that moral statements can accordingly be thought of as objectively true or false. Cognitivists typically try to support their position by seeking out [analogies](#) between moral discourse, on the one hand, and scientific and everyday factual discourse, on the other. Cognitivism is opposed by various forms of [noncognitivism](#), all of which have in common the denial of the cognitivist claim that the function of moral sentences is to state or describe facts.

MORAL STATEMENT

Murder is wrong.

Stealing is good.

Lying is good.

Helping people is
good.

FACTUAL STATEMENT

True

False

False

True

Non-cognitivism: non-cognitivists claim that moral statements are not in the business of describing properties or making statements that could be true or false in any sense. Moral statements have no substantial truth conditions. When people utter moral sentences they are not expressing states of mind that are beliefs or that are cognitive in the way that beliefs are. Rather they are expressing non-cognitive attitudes more similar to desires, approval or disapproval, like “Hey!”

MORAL STATEMENT**FACTUAL STATEMENT**

Murder is wrong.

No answer

Stealing is good.

No answer

Lying is good.

No answer

Helping people is
wrong.

No answer

SUBJECTIVISM AND OBJECTIVISM

Subjectivism in Ethics

Ethical subjectivism is the idea that moral opinions are based on our feelings and nothing more. On this view, there is no such thing as “objective” right and wrong.

Moral Objectivism

- Moral principles have objective validity, independent of cultural acceptance
- Moral principles or rules will serve as good reasons and the best guidance for making practical decisions
- Actions should be guided by standards that are established to determine if the actions would be one which all people would follow and which would produce the greatest good

- An **objective truth** is one that is true independently of how humans happen to think or feel about it.
- **Objectivism**: There are at least some objective moral truths.
- **Subjectivism**: There are no objective moral truths. "X is right" means "I approve of X". "X is wrong" means "I disapprove of X".

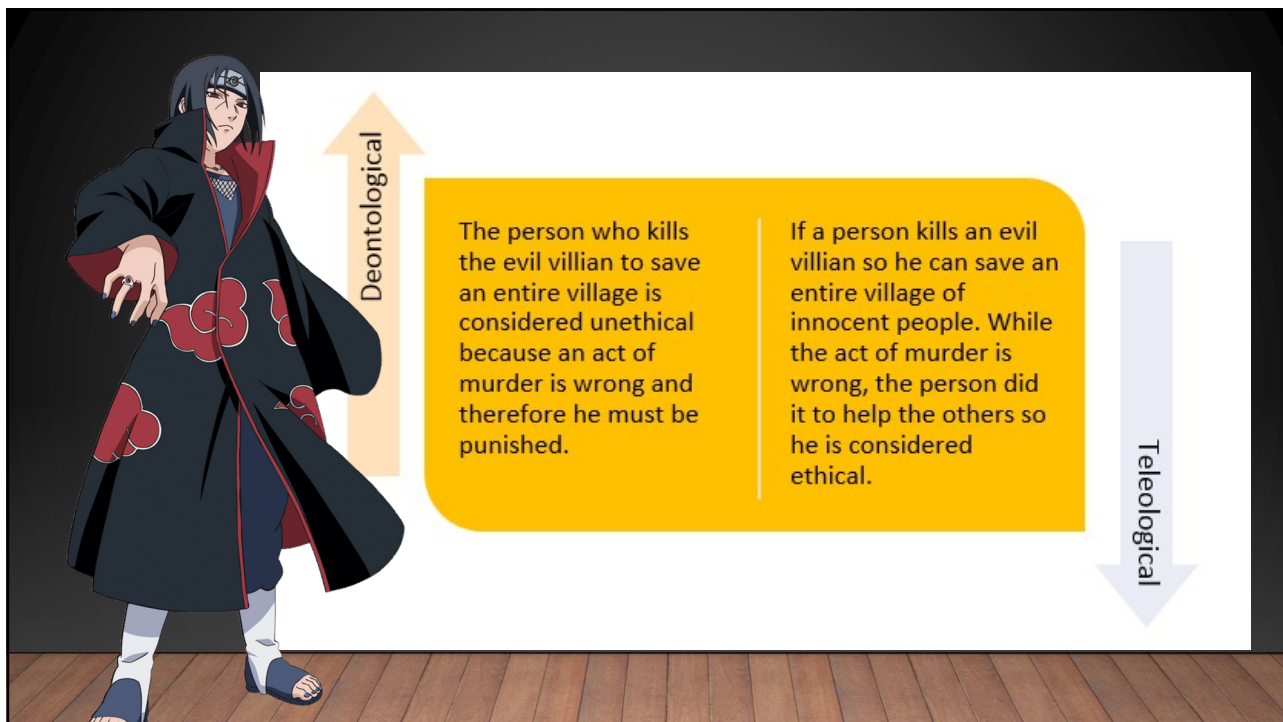
objectivism and subjectivism

Deontological ethics, in philosophy, ethical theories that place special emphasis on the relationship between duty and the morality of human actions. The term *deontology* is derived from the Greek *deon*, “duty,” and *logos*, “science.”

In deontological ethics an action is considered morally good because of some characteristic of the action itself, not because the product of the action is good. Deontological ethics holds that at least some acts are morally obligatory regardless of their consequences for human welfare. Descriptive of such ethics are such expressions as “Duty for duty’s sake,” “Virtue is its own reward,” and “Let justice be done though the heavens fall.”

Teleological theory of ethics...

- Teleological comes from the Greek word *Telos* meaning **end**.
- The theory looks at the **consequences**, the results of an action, to decide whether it’s right or wrong.
- For a Teleological thinker, the **end justifies the means**, and thus a thinker from this school of thought would judge the rightness of an action by the end it produces.



Utilitarian Ethics

- Utilitarianism is the idea that the moral worth of an action is determined solely by its contribution to overall utility:
- that is, its contribution to happiness or pleasure as summed among all people.
- It is thus a form of consequentialism, meaning that the moral worth of an action is determined by its outcome.

Virtue Ethics

- VIRTUE ETHICS is agent based, describing the character of a moral agent as the driving force for an ethical behavior.
 - In other words, VIRTUE ETHICS is concerned with a person's motivation for action and not with the action itself.
 - For example, if one performs a compassionate act, it is because one has a compassionate character in order to act in a compassionate way.
 - For the virtuous person, they believe it is intrinsically good to be compassionate, and the person's actions reflect this belief.

APPLIED ETHICS

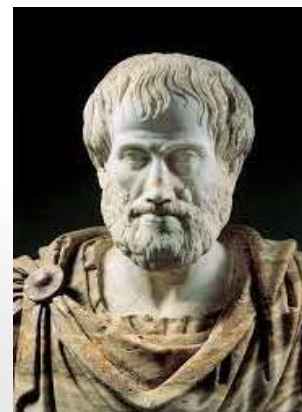
1. Bioethics - abortion, euthanasia, surrogate motherhood, cloning and genetic manipulation, mutilation, etc.
2. Human Sexual Ethics - human sexuality, pre-marital sex, extra-marital sex, pornography, contraception, loveless and casual sex, rape, etc.
3. Environmental Ethics - animal welfare and rights, environmental sanitation, pollution control, ~~kaingin~~, cyanide fishing, etc.
4. Business Ethics - harassment, job discrimination, employer-employee relationship, whistle blowing, unprofessionalism, false advertising, etc.
5. Social Ethics - poverty, child labor, war on drugs, death penalty, racial discrimination, gender discrimination, etc.

VIRTUE ETHICS

BY ARISTOTLE

ARISTOTLE

—322 B.C.E.) **Aristotle** is a towering figure in ancient Greek philosophy, who made important contributions to logic, criticism, rhetoric, physics, biology, psychology, mathematics, metaphysics, **ethics**, and politics.



VIRTUE ETHICS

IMAGINE A PERSON WHO:

- ✓ Always knows what to say
- ✓ Can diffuse a tense situation
- ✓ Deliver tough news gracefully
- ✓ Confident without being arrogant
- ✓ Brave but not reckless
- ✓ Generous but not extravagant

VIRTUOUS



VIRTUE THEORY

noun / vir·tue the·ry

ETHICAL THEORY THAT EMPHASIZES AN INDIVIDUAL'S CHARACTER
RATHER THAN FOLLOWING A SET OF RULES.

THE GOAL

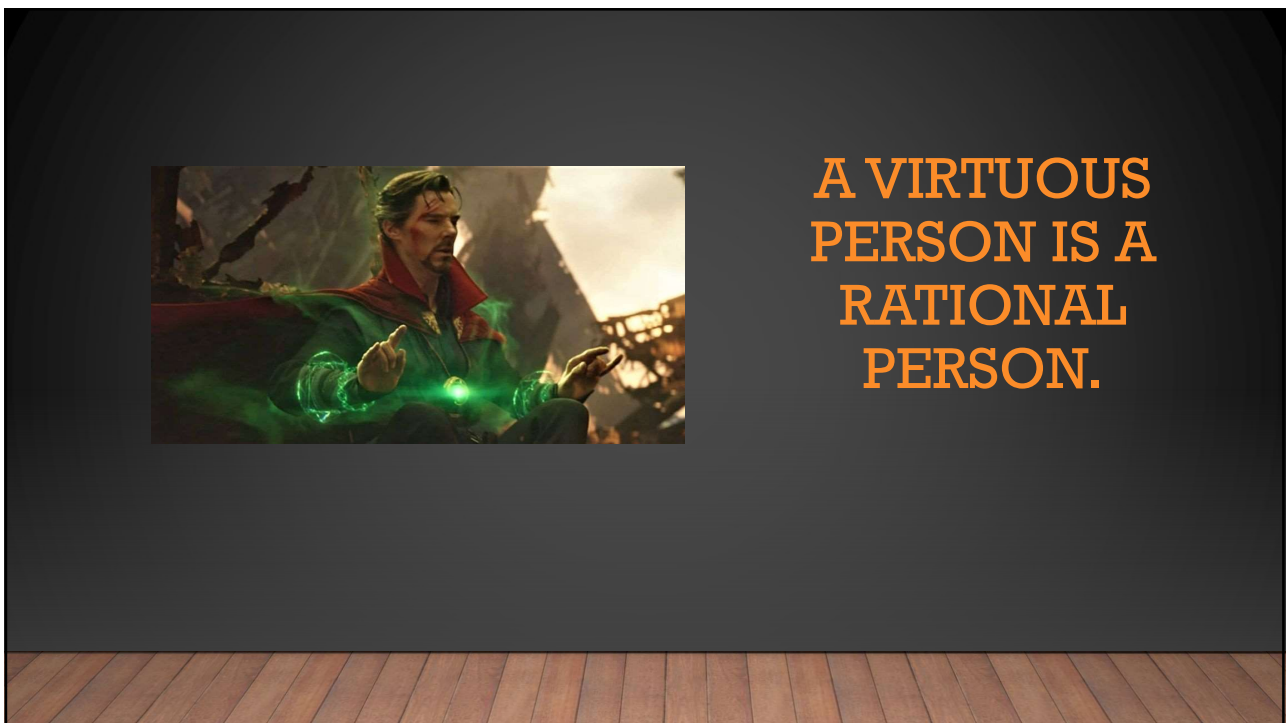
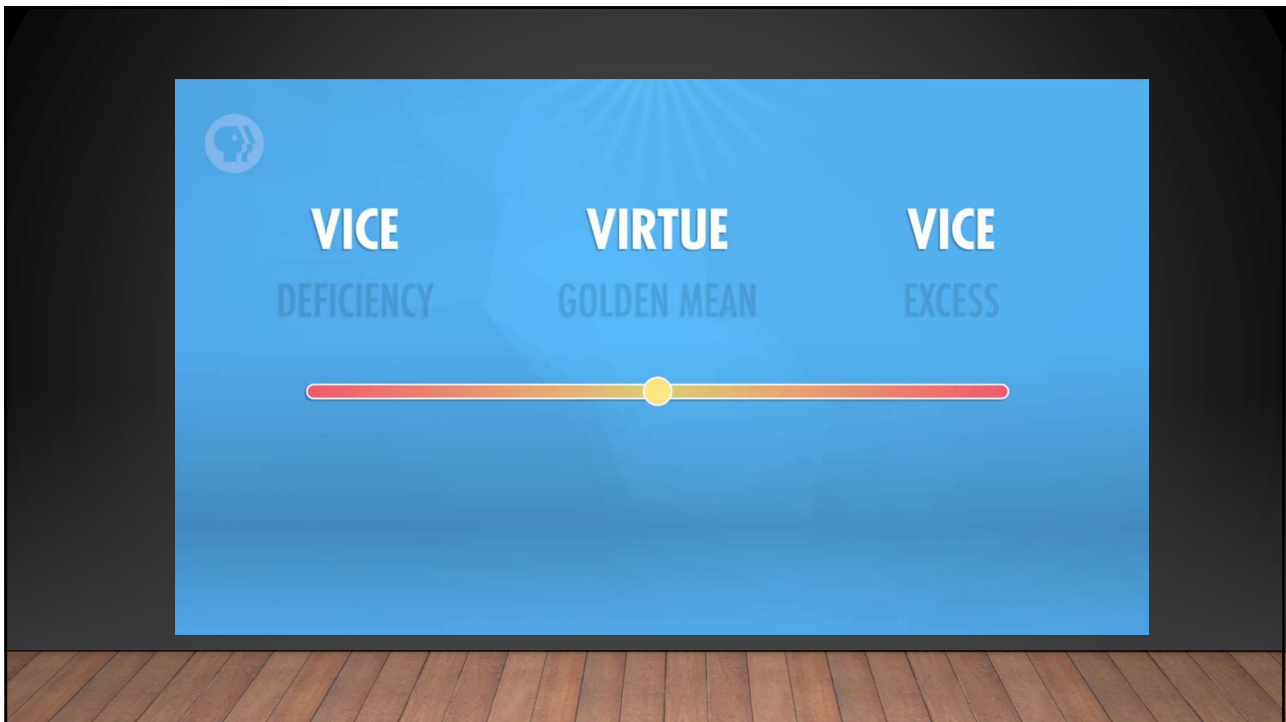
eudaimonia

(n.) lit. "human flourishing"; a contented state of being happy and healthy and prosperous

WHAT EXACTLY DOES IT
MEAN TO BE VIRTUOUS?

Having **virtue** just means doing the **right thing**, at the **right time**, in the **right way**, in the **right amount**, toward the **right people**.

A **virtuous person** is someone who knows **how to handle his or herself**, knows how to get along with others, has a good judgment, can read a room, knows what is **right** and **when**.



| Aristotle's Concept of the Golden Mean | | |
|--|--------------|---------------|
| Deficiency (-) | BALANCE | Excess (+) |
| cowardice | COURAGE | rashness |
| stinginess/miserliness | GENEROSITY | extravagance |
| sloth | AMBITION | greed |
| humility | MODESTY | pride |
| secrecy | HONESTY | loquacity |
| moroseness | GOOD HUMOR | absurdity |
| quarrelsomeness | FRIENDSHIP | flattery |
| self-indulgence | TEMPERANCE | insensibility |
| apathy | COMPOSURE | irritability |
| indecisiveness | SELF CONTROL | impulsiveness |

If we can just focus on being
good people, the right action
will follow, effortlessly.

THOMAS AQUINAS AND NATURAL LAW

THOMAS AQUINAS

- ❑ Italian philosopher and theologian
- ❑ Angelic Doctor
- ❑ Prince of Scholastics



NATURAL LAW

By Thomas Aquinas

NATURAL LAW

- ❑ based on the two fundamental authority
 - ❑ the Bible and Aristotle
- ❑ a moral code existing within the purpose of nature, created by God

MORALITY

- ❑ Accessible through natural order given by God
- ❑ It is universal and relevant to all situations and accessible to all
- ❑ It is unchanging and for all time, whether or not they believe in God

BASIC MORAL LAW

“Good is to be done and pursued... and evil to be avoided.”

FOUR PRIMARY TYPES OF LAW

- ❑ Eternal Law- rational plan of God by which all creation is ordered
- ❑ Natural Law- aspect of eternal law accessible to human reason
- ❑ Human Law- positive natural laws. Includes civil and criminal laws. Human laws that are against natural law are not binding
- ❑ Divine Law- Law of revelation, disclosed through sacred texts of scriptures and the church directed toward man's eternal end.

AQUINAS' NATURAL LAW

- ❑ happiness or *eudaimonia* is our natural telos

NATURAL LAWS TO FOLLOW TO ACHIEVE TRUE HAPPINESS

PRIMARY PRECEPTS

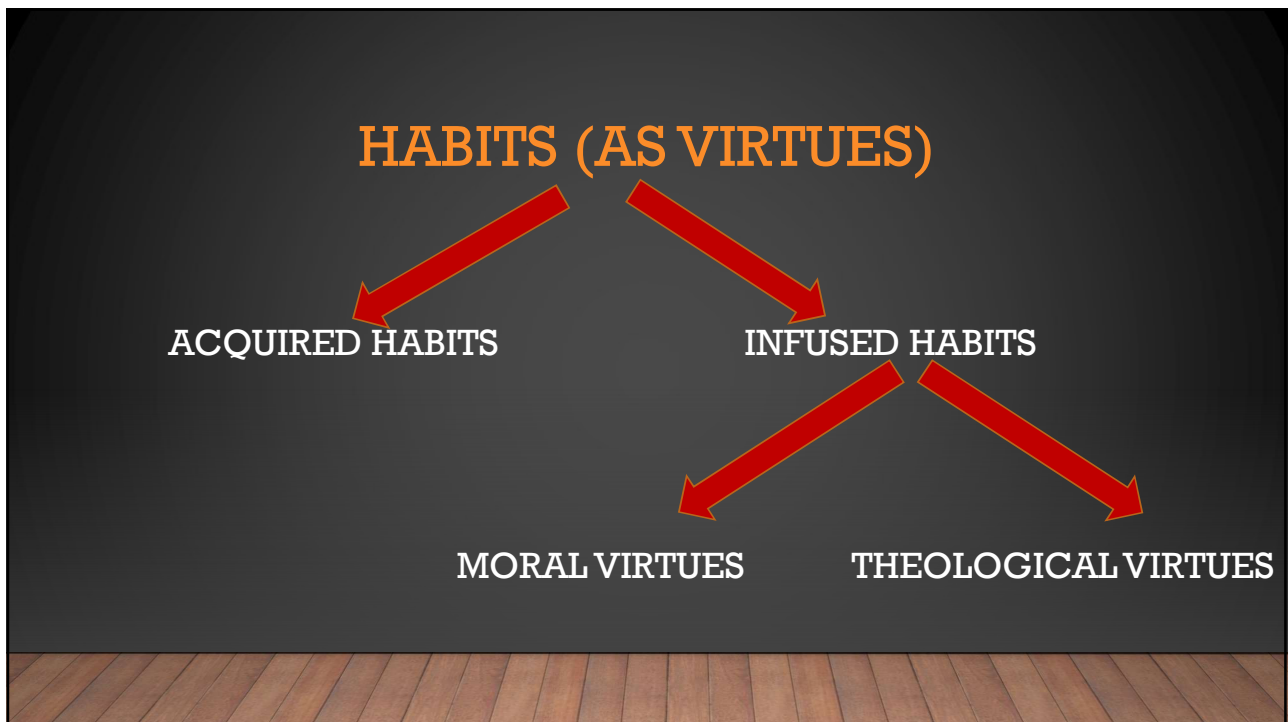
- ❑ REPRODUCTION
- ❑ EDUCATION
- ❑ PEACEFUL LIVING
- ❑ WORSHIPPING GOD

SECONDARY PRECEPTS

- ❑ THE WAYS IN WHICH THE PRIMARY PRECEPTS CAN BE PUT INTO PRACTICE

HAPPINESS AS CONSTITUTIVE OF MORAL AND CARDINAL VIRTUES

Thomas Aquinas “believes that all actions are directed towards ends and that eternal happiness is the final end. He also thinks that happiness is not equated with pleasure, material possessions, honour or any sensual good, but consists in activities in accordance with virtues. A person needs a moral character cultivated through the habit of choice to realize real happiness” (De Guzman, 2018).



HOW HAPPINESS BECOMES CONSTITUTIVE OF MORAL AND CARDINAL VIRTUES?

For, Aquinas, Happiness entails the wholeness/totality of human being that involves body and soul to be united with the highest good or the *summum bonum*, no other than God himself who is in heaven. Man's ultimate fulfilment of his nature is to live as being God's creature through the exercise of virtues and in accordance to man's final purpose. The Divine plan of God is for man to act to his ultimate purpose/end. Man should not hinder his future union with God in heaven. (Gallinero, 2018)

KANT AND RIGHTS THEORY

IMMANUEL KANT (1724–1804)



- German thinker regarded by many as the most significant philosopher in the modern era
- *The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* and *The Critique of Practical Reason*

KANTIAN ETHICS

- based primarily on an *a priori* foundation
- His ethical theory uses reason alone
- Rejects ethical judgments that are based on feelings
- Genuine morality is based on the moral law, which is valid for all people because it is grounded completely on rational exercise
- Kant's test for the rational consistency of a moral principle is the *categorical imperative*

A POSTERIORI VS A PRIORI

A POSTERIORI

KNOWLEDGE IS OBTAINED
THROUGH EXPERIENCE

A PRIORI

KNOWLEDGE IS OBTAINED BY
ANALYZING CONCEPTS
INDEPENDENT OF EXPERIENCE

KANT'S 3 ETHICAL PROPOSITIONS

- ❑ An act must be done from duty in order for it to have an inner moral worth.
- ❑ An act done from sense of duty derives its moral worth, not from the purpose, which is to be attained by it, but from the *maxim* by which it is determined.
- ❑ Duty is the necessity of acting from respect for the law

HYPOTHETICAL VS CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVES

A HYPOTHETICAL IMPERATIVE [i.e., an imperative based on inclination or desire] represents "the practical necessity of a possible action as means to something else that is willed (or at least which one might possibly will)."

A CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE [i.e., an imperative based on reason alone] is one that represents "an action as objectively necessary in itself apart from its relation to a further end"

KANT'S FORMULATIONS OF THE CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE

- ❑ *Act only on that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law. (Principle of Universality)*
- ❑ *Act as to treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of any other person or in that of any other, in every case as an end in itself, not as means only. (Principle of Humanity as End-in-Itself)*
- ❑ *Act so that your will is what makes universal law. (Principle of Autonomy)*

RIGHTS THEORY

DIFFERENT KINDS OF RIGHTS

❑ Legal Rights

Legal rights refer to all the rights that you have (as stated in any existing law) as a citizen of the Philippines, or any particular country.

❑ Moral Rights

Moral rights refer to those rights attributed to all moral entities (Gallinero, 2018). These rights are independent and precisely existed before any legal rights.

❑ Human Rights

“They are best thought of as being both moral and legal rights. The legitimacy claims of human rights are connected to their status as moral rights. Nonetheless, the practical efficacy of human rights is essentially dependent upon their developing into legal rights” (De Guzman, 2018).

UTILITARIANISM

ACT UTILITARIANISM AND RULE UTILITARIANISM

JEREMY BENTHAM AND JOHN STEWART MILL

ACT UTILITARIANISM

- ❑ The basis for an act to be treated as morally right or wrong is in its consequence they produced.
- ❑ What matters in every act that we do would be the amount of pleasure/happiness produced. The greatest happiness produced should be chosen over other choices.
- ❑ Thus, it follows that human beings are inclined more to achieving happiness and as much as possible avoid what is painful. Bentham emphasizes the quantity of happiness and pleasure in every consequence of an action.

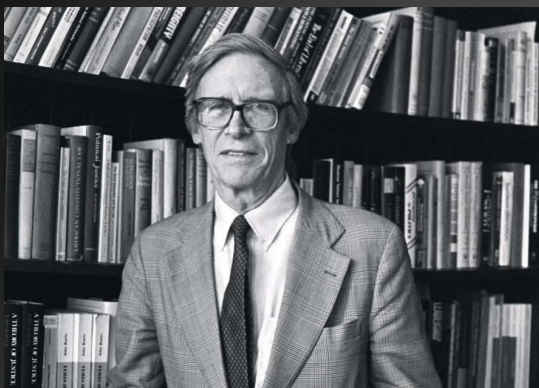
RULE UTILITARIANISM

- ❑ Mill differs fundamentally from Bentham on two central aspects.
 1. Mill rejects the purely quantitative treatment of the principle of utility;
 2. He introduces the so-called 'secondary principles' which set the tone for a contemporary variant form of the theory called rule utilitarianism". Mill is considered as *qualitative hedonist*.

JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS: PROMOTING THE COMMON GOOD

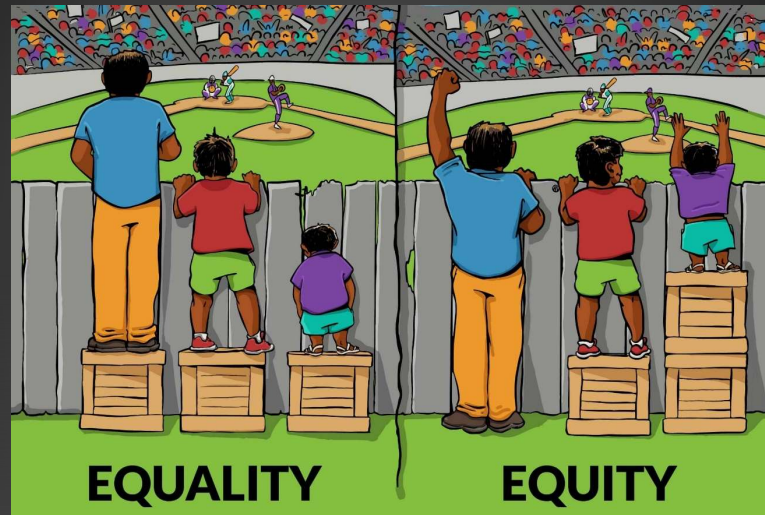
JOHN RAWLS AND THE THEORY OF JUSTICE

JOHN RAWLS



He is one of the important political philosophers during the 20th century. His main work is *A Theory of Justice* published in 1971. This work has addressed some of the social issues especially in the name of justice between the state and the citizens and among the citizens. He received his academic training at Princeton University, and later part of his career he became a philosophy professor at Harvard University. (Gallinero, 2018)

EQUALITY VS EQUITY



THE NATURE OF THE THEORY

DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

This means “everyone in the society has to share both the burden and the benefit of whatever the society offers.

THE PRINCIPLES OF TAXATION AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

- As stated in the 1987 Constitution, Article X - Section V, the government has the power to create sources of revenues and to levy taxes, fees and charges. The government cannot support its existence and perform its duties such as projects for the betterment of the land and its people without this power of taxation.
- “The basis of taxation is necessity and reciprocal duties. There can be no government without the monetary aspects for its operations. This responsibility springs from the concept of rights and duties” (Gallinero, 2018).

“In a completely rational society, the best of us would be teachers and the rest of us would have to settle for something less, because passing civilization along from one generation to the next ought to be the highest honor and the highest responsibility anyone could have.”

— **Lee Iacocca**