

IT and Values Lectures

April, 2014

1 First Lecture : Intro into Ethics

Ethics is that branch of philosophy investigating issues of "the good"

Metaethics is the attempt to judge ethical theories

Normative ethics attempts to derive standards of rightness or wrongness

Virtue Ethics

Plato : cardinal virtues: wisdom, courage, temperance, justice

Other virtues: fortitude, generosity, self-respect, good temper, sincerity

Vices: cowardice, insensibility, injustice, vanity

Aristotle: virtues are means between extreme character traits (excess/mean/deficiency)

Thomas Aquinas : Christian virtues: faith, hope, charity

Deontology (From Greek: δέον = duty)

Duty theories base morality on specific, foundational principles of duty

Samuel Pufendorf classified duties under three headings:

- Duties to God
 - know the existence and nature of God
 - worship God
- Duties to Oneself
 - duties of the soul (skills, talents, ...)
 - duties to the body
- Duties to Others
 - Absolute duties (avoid wronging, treat as equals, promote the good)
 - Conditional duties (contracts between people)

John Locke: rights theory: The laws of nature mandate that we should not harm anyone's life, health, liberty or possessions

Natural rights are

Natural: not invented or created by governments

Universal: do not change from country to country

Equal: same for all people, regardless of gender, race or handicap

Inalienable: one cannot hand over rights to another person

Immanuel Kant: categorical imperative: mandates an action, *regardless of desires*

"Treat people as an end, and never as a means to an end"

"Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it would become a universal law"

Consequentialism

Good conduct is determined solely by a cost-benefit analysis of an action's consequences.

Teleological theories

Ethical Egoism: consequences are more favourable to me

Ethical Altruism: consequences are more favourable to everyone except me

Utilitarianism: consequences increase overall happiness

Hedonistic utilitarianism: pleasure and pain are the only consequences that matter

Jeremy Bentham : act-utilitarianism: tally the consequences of each action we perform

John Stuart Mill: place certain pleasures above others
intellectual pleasures > bodily pleasures

Rule-utilitarianism: morality of adoption of rules

2 Second Lecture : Cybercrime

Some criminal acts are facilitated by ICT. Others are only possible because the technology exists.

Crime: some act + intentional state made explicitly forbidden by law

Kevin Mitnick: Hacking

Fraud: wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in financial or personal gain.

Computer Fraud: dishonest misrepresentation, let another do or refrain from doing something which causes loss.

- Altering, destroying, suppressing or stealing output
- Altering or deleting stored data

- Altering or misusing existing system tools or software packages
- Altering or writing code for fraudulent purposes

Espionage: Markus Hess / Lawrence Berkley Laboratories

Espionage or spying involves a government or individual obtaining information considered secret or confidential without the permission of the holder of the information

Speech / Expression involves

Obscenity: Child pornography, locally obscene materials

Harassment: Directed at specific individuals or groups

Threats: intimidation with implication of harm

Property

Goods: Theft

Ideas: Intellectual Property

Cyber Terrorism / Other

Anonymous, Kim Dotcom, Edward Snowden, Silk Road, Bitcoin

3 Third Lecture : Value Sensitive Design

Empirical Research forms the middle ground between **Subjective** and **Objective** theories

Prudential-Empirical Ethics of Technology

- empirical findings that *suggest* what kinds of experiences and activities *tend to* increase subjective well-being
- critical evaluation of validity and causal relationships
- translate into concrete technological features
- minimise negative side-effects

Ed Diener's Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) measures life-satisfaction

- Overall life satisfaction
- Real-time pings

Positive Psychology: The scientific study of what constitutes subjective well-being and how it can be enhanced

Flow Transformation of time

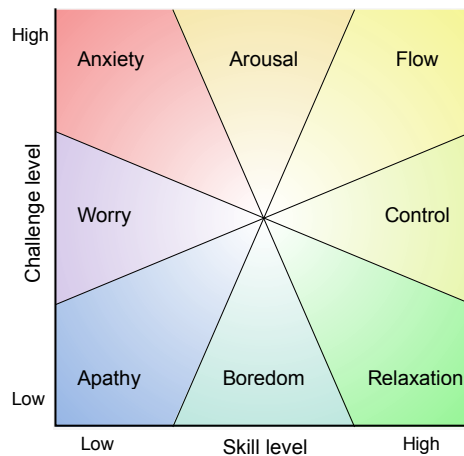


Figure 1: Flow

Absolute wealth vs relative wealth

Being social and belonging to a community is a strong determinant

Sensory pleasure is strongest when the brain accomplishes a difficult task unexpectedly

User Interface must allow for users at cognitive and autonomous stages

The ideal user interface continuously co-adapts to user in such a way that an expert's usage will in practice be incomprehensible to novice

Online altruism can be entirely illusory, giving well-being benefit without actually doing anything good for the world (**Slacktivism**)

4 Fourth Lecture : Privacy and ICT

Privacy is the right to be left alone

Privacy is the right to control what others know about you

Forms of privacy:

- Personal
- Territorial
- Communications
- Informational

Openness and transparency: there should be no secret record keeping

Individual participation: the subject of a record should be able to see and correct the record

Collection limitation: data collection should be proportional

Data quality: data should be relevant to the purpose

Use limitation: Data should only be used for their specific purpose by authorized personnel

Reasonable security: Adequate security safeguards

Accountability: Record keepers must be accountable for compliance with these principles

Convenience: free flow of information ↔ personal risks

Communitarian: give up privacy for the greater good

Egalitarian: everybody has access to the same information "transparent society"

Hoffman (1980):

- the right to determine what information to share
- the right to know what is being collected
- the right to access data

Westin classes people into three distinct groups:

- fundamentalists always choose privacy
- unconcerned individuals are willing to forego most privacy claims in exchange for service benefits
- pragmatists weigh the benefits of services against the degree of personal information sought

5 Fifth Lecture

6 Sixth Lecture : Democracy and ICT

The nature of the medium of ICT is inherently linked to maximal freedom.

Ideas vs artifacts

"Expression"

Copyright vs Patent

7 Seventh Lecture