

# 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

**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

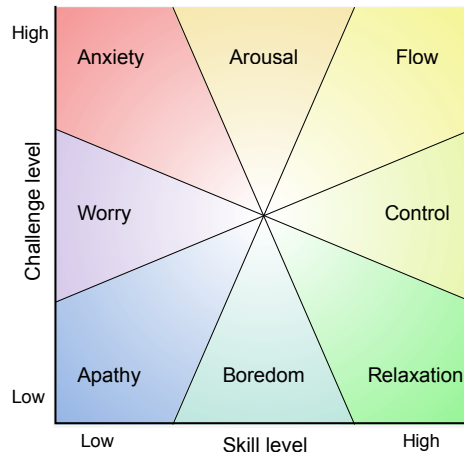


Figure 1: Flow

**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  $\leftrightarrow$  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