80-100: Introduction to Philosophy

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Paper #2

In this paper I will develop an argument stating whether or not I believe that it is in your best interest to be moral. For the sake of clarity and reduced complexity, I will be simplifying moral to mean the typical stereotypes of right and wrong in today’s society, because this can still be ambiguous at times I will clearly state in all examples what would be considered the moral choice in said situation. Although moral decisions are almost never directly profitable in the short term physical, they can be immediately profitable mentally, and are almost always better physically in the long term. I will be considering your best interest to be to put yourself in the best possible situation in the long term because, in real life, events do not happen in a vacuum, meaning that every event in life has some effect, whether it be major or minor, on subsequent events. I will develop my argument by looking at two different possible definitions of ethical egoism, one of which I believe to be a faulty and the other sound, that when studied side-by-side support my argument. I will end by pointing out flaws in my argument and finally redefining my argument in light of these flaws.

Ethical egoism states that one should always do what is in their best interest purely for the sake of one’s self and for no other reason, though this statement seems pretty straight-forward, I believe it leaves itself open for interpretation which of course can always lead to misinterpretation. One way that ethical egoism can be misinterpreted is that it can be thought to mean one should go for whatever choice is most immediately or directly profitable for them. One example of this misinterpretation is in the way that Baier makes an example of ethical egoism. Baier gives an example of two candidates running for presidency of a country, in the first part of his example he states that it is in the best interest of one candidate, whom he calls B, to kill the other candidate, whom he calls K, so that B may be elected. Now there are flaws in the overall argument that Rachel points out in his paper on ethical egoism, but he fails to point out that this is really just a horrible example because it only works on the assumption that the election is the only thing that matters, in-fact it is almost as if the world would be required to end immediately following the election. Before continuing my argument I would like to again point out the fact that the world is not a vacuum with mutually exclusive events.