

(1) Expound non-cognitivism in meta-ethics. Do you find it plausible? Why or why not? Justify - that is give reasons for - your answer.

In meta-ethics, non-cognitivism is a theory that hypothesizes ethical statements as expressions of emotions, attitude, or commands instead of stating what is true or false. This perspective challenges conservative views which hold strong moral judgements that can be evaluated for truth or false. Non-cognitivism suggests that ethical language serves purposes beyond rather than stating facts about actions as it dives into deeper underlying intentions and purposes behind those actions. This essay will interpret non-cognitivism while assessing its plausibility with reasons.

The main idea of non-cognitivism is the idea of moral statement that does not convey beliefs about world but rather express in an attitude, preference, or emotions. For example, someone says, "Murder is wrong". In this example, they are expressing their disapproval of murder rather than making a claim about the objective moral status. This illustrate using emotive language or moral imperatives, which suggests that Moral statements are more like expressing emotions or giving orders rather than stating facts.

One of the strengths of non-cognitivism is the ability to explain why moral conversations are based on personal feelings and emotions as it acknowledges the diversity of moral beliefs among different cultures and individuals while suggesting that moral judgements are originated in each person's attitudes and emotions instead of universal truths. Furthermore, non-cognitivism portrays a straightforward explanation for the emotional force of the moral language. It also follows that they can influence behaviour by appealing to individual's emotions if the moral statements are expressions of attitudes and commands.

Despite its explanations are good in certain situations, non-cognitivism has various challenges that undermine its credibility. One significant critique is the apparent inability to make sense of the apparent truth-aptness of moral discourse. It remains puzzling why people still debate about morality while non-cognitivists argue that moral statements lack value. Critics also conclude that non-cognitivism has a hard time explaining why moral disagreements matter and how people can make rational decisions if moral statements only express personal feelings.

Moreover, non-cognitivism encounter difficulties in explaining moral reasoning and how people's beliefs can be justified in a clear logical way. It is no clear how an individual can rationally evaluate a moral claim if moral judgements are not based on beliefs about objective moral truths. Although non-cognitivists may lean towards practical reasoning, the explanations often fail to provide a robust framework for thinking and coming to a decision about what is morally right or wrong.

Additionally, there are challenges in explaining apparent cognitive content of moral statements. Although moral judgments have the tendency to sound like strong emotions or commands, they often include information about how we should see the world and what's right for us. For instance, when someone states "It is wrong to harm others", they make a claim about the moral status of harming others instead of expressing a personal statement. Thus, non-cognitivists struggle to explain what a moral language contains about the world as their statements are controversial.

In conclusion, while non-cognitivism offers valuable guidance into the emotive and prescriptive functions, its plausibility is undermined as it fails to explain how moral discussions seem to be about truth, make sense, and contain meaningful information. Non-cognitivism also falls short of providing a comprehensive statement of moral reasoning and justification while it comes up

with explanation for the subjective and motivational aspects of morality. Therefore, while it might offer valuable perspectives on certain topics, it is firmly believed that it fails to supply a satisfactory solution to cognitivist approaches in meta-ethics.

Acknowledgements

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[Accessed 10 March 2023].

(4) Is kicking a robot dog morally wrong, or morally permissible? In your answer, make explicit detailed reference to virtue ethics. Which answer or answers might virtue ethics give us? Are any of these answers, correct? Why?

As technology advances rapidly over the years, our daily lifestyles start to lean on technology as the development have become more intelligent, efficient, and immersive. Among these creations, the controversy of how we keep up and treat the new inventions arises. This essay will explore the moral permissibility of kicking a robotic dog within the framework of virtue ethics. Virtue ethics is the philosophical approach to ethics where it focuses on the development of moral excellence such as courage, compassion, and wisdom. It also provides guidance on how people should live their lives by making certain ethical decisions.

Majority of the people would argue that it is ethically incorrect to mistreat to robots especially to those which seem to be more interactive and lifelike. For instance, when a video of a robot called Spot (Boston Dynamics, 2015) was dropped, it went viral as the robotic dog was kicked to showcase how it could withstand incoming action. People felt sorry and empathy for the dog as they anticipate the view as cruel and mean. This proves that there is a growing mutual understanding among people that such creations should be treated with kindness and see robots as more than just machines. In a virtue ethics perspective, these reactions illustrate the significance of demonstrating kindness and compassion towards, just as one should towards other living beings.

One the other side, one may argue that a robotic dog is not alike to an ordinary dog at all as they are just machines. Devices are invulnerable to thoughts or feelings like normal living things so actions such as kicking wouldn't be detrimental to them. Moreover, the owner of the robotic dog has the power to decide how they want to treat their dogs which raises the controversial topic of whether the possessor should be allowed to do anything under the will. Regarding to the lack of consciousness and feelings in robots, this additionally brings up if robots deserve the same moral consideration as living beings.

Another perspective to consider is that of the philosopher Immanuel Kant. Kant argue that the mistreating animals wasn't wrong because animals also have conscious and feelings like human beings. For instance, if someone kicks a robot, it portrays the kind of person who does such action, and this doesn't relate whether the root is special or process pain. Therefore, it states that our own character and judgements comes from how we treat the robots. In response to acknowledge virtue ethics, it is also subjective to the owner as the ethical framework provides perspective for understanding human-robot interactions. Although it may not offer a universal solution, it illustrates how different individuals react to robots and their actions shows about their characteristics.

In conclusion, considering how we treat robots is more important than the issue seems. Some may argue for empathy and kindness towards robots, while others contend that it is acceptable to mistreat them due their lack of human-like nature. However, as virtue ethics guides on being by showing kindness and offers deeper understanding human-robot interactions. Ultimately, being a good person entails showing compassion to all, including robots. Therefore, it is firmly believed that mistreating a robotic dog such as kicking it is morally incorrect, demonstrating a lack of consideration for virtues such as respect, empathy, and compassion.

Acknowledgements

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