

# Kantianism / Deontology

Unlike utilitarianism, Kantianism is not concerned with outcomes. Instead, the motive for why you did certain actions is more important.

## Duties

Definition 0.1

**Perfect duties** are duties we are obligated to fulfill in every instance. **Imperfect duties** we are obligated to fulfill in general but not in every instance.

## Imperatives

An **imperative** is a way in which reason commands will.

Definition 0.2

A **hypothetical imperative** is a conditional rule of the form "If you want X then do Y" A **categorical imperative** is a unconditional rule: a rule that always applies, regardless of circumstance. For Kant, only a categorical imperative can be a moral imperative.

Both of the *main two categorical imperatives* should be held for an act to be considered morally right.

1. Act only from moral rules that you can at the same time will to be universal laws
2. Act so that you always treat both yourself and other people as ends in themselves, and never only as a means to an end

### The Case For:

- It treats all person as moral equals
- It gives all persons moral worth by considering them rational, autonomous beings
- Everyone is held to the same standard
- Kantianism produces universal moral guidelines

### The Case Against:

- Sometimes no single rule can fully characterize an action
- Sometimes there is no way to resolve a conflict between rules
- Kantianism allows no exceptions to perfect duties