# PHI 202 | Precept on lectures 5 and 6
Michal Masny | 18 Sep 2020

### READINGS:
Taurek, J. (1977). Should the Numbers Count?
Scanlon, T. (1998). *What We Owe to Each Other*. Chapter 5.

### LEGITIMATE PARTIALITY AND ITS LIMITS
**(1)** Taurek presents three cases. In the first one, you face a choice between saving yourself or five strangers. In the second one, you face a choice between saving your friend David or five strangers. In the third one, you face a choice between saving one stranger or five strangers. What role do these cases play in Taurek's argument? How does the argument go?

(Whole group)

**(2)** *Kevin H:* I have a question about the David case. I get that some would argue that it is morally permissible to save your friend David over the lives of 5 strangers. However, is there a number at which this is no longer true (and if there is, how is that number determined)? I think most would agree that saving your friend over a few strangers' lives is reasonable and morally permissible, but what if it's 100 lives? Or 100,000 lives? (…)

(Breakout rooms)

**(3)** *Logan*: While considering Taurek's stance on the David case, I began to wonder what his response might be if the situation were slightly altered. For him, it was morally permissible to save David at the cost of five because he knows and likes David. But what if there was someone in the group of five whom he liked just as much as he liked David? What if he liked all six individuals in the case, but he had ever so slightly stronger feelings toward David than the others? How about if he liked two of the five just as much as he liked David, but had an intense hate for the other three? (…) Essentially, I am wondering if there is any case where Taurek's decision would change.

(Whole group)

### AGGREGATION
**(4)** Taurek claims not just (i) that it is permissible to save one rather than five, but also (ii) that an outcome in which five people would die is *not worse* than an outcome in which one person dies. What kinds of considerations does he appeal to in this context?

(Whole group)

### MORAL CONTRACTUALISM
**(5)** What is Scanlon's view in a nutshell? What does he think about aggregation?

(Explain)

**(6)** Scanlon claims that numbers may count when people's claims are *close enough* in strength to be *morally relevant* to one another. He says this to accommodate the idea that you should save, say, 100 people from paralysis rather than 1 person from death. But what about the following case?

    A: Save 1 person from death
    B: Save 100 people from paralysis
    C: Save 10,000 people from losing a hand
    D: Save 1,000,000 people from suffering a minor headache

(Breakout rooms)