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**Chapter 2 Questions**

1. An ethical theory is a framework for moral decision-making – a methodology that dictates the way one approaches moral dilemmas and the steps to working through these dilemmas.
   1. The author rejects subjective relativism as a workable ethical theory because it is based on the idea that each individual decides right and wrong for themselves. If someone is trying to persuade other people that his/her view is the right one, subjective relativism is not going to help him/her, because the very premise of the idea is basically that everyone is right – if the person that needs convincing believes one thing, the convincer has no choice but to agree that the other’s view is just as right as his/her own, within the framework of subjective relativism.
   2. The author also rejects the divine command theory because it is based on obedience rather than reason, is unrealistic for multi-cultural societies such as our own, and is not a good tool for debating in a secular society because its conclusions are not based on reason. One more problem with the divine command theory is that no one can agree on which deity/religion is the highest authority, because there are so many religions and all are different.
2. The difference between Act Utilitarianism and Rule Utilitarianism is that Act Utilitarianism asserts that one should evaluate the pros and cons of every single moral decision as it comes along, and make a decision based on which action will result in the most total good for all beings involved, while Rule Utilitarianism asserts that we should follow pre-determined moral guidelines that we know will lead to the greatest increase in total happiness for all beings involved/society as a whole. They are similar in that they both seek to maximize good, but Rule Utilitarianism seeks out the long-term consequences of actions, weighing the pros and cons of certain decisions by asking, “what would happen if everyone acted this way?”
3. The ethical theory that most closely matches my own ethical framework is a mixture of Social Contract Theory and Rule Utilitarianism. I think the Kantian theory is too rigid to be practical, and in real life everyone bends/breaks rules because life just doesn’t fit into perfect little boxes. Act Utilitarianism is useful when it’s difficult to find a solution to a problem, and working through it bit by bit, weighing the costs and benefits for everyone involved is often helpful. However, every decision cannot be made this way because it would take way too long. Social contract theory is very practical, and ensures that society runs smoothly as long as everyone buys into the idea of following the rules because they know that not following them will result in greater burden for themselves and less benefits. I like Rule Utilitarianism because it focuses on happiness, and tries to maximize the happiness for all people. The ethical rules you follow are based on what will benefit yourself and others most. Combining the two makes sense because one can make decisions in a way that benefits everyone, but also stays within the bounds of agreed-upon social moral standards, so as not to infringe upon the rights of others.