
Business Ethics & the use of data

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Does anyone have a definition of business ethics?



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In 1970, Milton Friedman famously argued that the only social responsibility of business was to maximize profits.

“The only business of business is business” -President **Calvin Coolidge**

Does anyone have a definition of business ethics?

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A set of behavioral standards informing and justifying your actions while transacting
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business, commerce etc.

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What about in the context of data, machine learning & AI?

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What about in the context of data, machine learning & AI?

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Does using data and algorithms justify all actions since the underlying operations are just math?

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What about in the context of data, machine learning & AI?

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The use of data and mining approaches can be credited so are the outcomes of those efforts justified?

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What about in the context of data, machine learning & AI?



Article 1

What was Knight Capital? What did they do?
What happened to them?

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Article 1

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- Does HFT provide liquidity?
- Does it negatively impact everyday investors? Do they provide real economic value?
- *Short term the market is a negative sum transaction due to these market makers. Is that fair for the retail investor or pension holder?*



Article 1

Is there a business and data ethics question related to their demise?

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Article 1

Is there a business and data ethics question related to their demise?

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- Who was impacted?
- What did the practitioners and leaders miss?
- What could have been done to mitigate the impact?



Article 2

What happened to Target?

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Article 2

Is there a business and data ethics question? Who was impacted?
If so, what did the practitioners and leaders miss?
What could have been done to mitigate the impact?

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Article 2

Is there a business and data ethics question? Who was impacted?
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Notice how Target originally wanted to brag about modeling & accuracy?
Why did they stop letting the data scientist talk to reporters?

Article 2

Is there a business and data ethics question? Who was impacted?
If so, what did the practitioners and leaders miss?
What could have been done to mitigate the impact?

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- Is predicting simply spying and a form of privacy invasion?
- Is Target being underhanded by masking their intent with non pregnancy coupons?
- Are consumers manipulated by these tactics or is it a benefit?

Article 3

What is Starbuck's doing?

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Article 3

Isn't scheduling a normal operation of most businesses?

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Article 3

Is there a business and data ethics question? Who was impacted?
If so, what did the practitioners and leaders miss?
What could have been done to mitigate the impact?

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Article 3

Is there a business and data ethics question? Who was impacted?
If so, what did the practitioners and leaders miss?
What could have been done to mitigate the impact?

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- Does optimizing a schedule for near term hardship ultimately ensure success of the company and lead to job stability?
- Does SBUX have a duty to employees as another stakeholder with varying social-economic situations?
- Are customers willing to wait a few minutes longer to less than fully optimized schedules?

Article 4

Is Watson amazing technology free from moral obligation?

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Article 4

Is there a business and data ethics question? Who was impacted?
If so, what did the practitioners and leaders miss?
What could have been done to mitigate the impact?

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Article 4

Is there a business and data ethics question? Who was impacted?
If so, what did the practitioners and leaders miss?
What could have been done to mitigate the impact?

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- Was it marketing ignorance, merely aspirational claims, or truly deceptive? Does that matter to patients?
- What duty do the technical folks have to inform of limitations to sales, business and customers?
- Do business leaders have a duty to question the choices and practices of technical creators?
- What duty do the customers have to thoroughly review the underlying technology?

Article 5

Is there a business and data ethics question? Who was impacted?
If so, what did the practitioners and leaders miss?
What could have been done to mitigate the impact?

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Article 5

Is there a business and data ethics question? Who was impacted?
If so, what did the practitioners and leaders miss?
What could have been done to mitigate the impact?

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Harmless marketing stunt that turned ugly? If we have to filter the training data and provide guardrails do we invite censorship & bias?

Article 5

Is there a business and data ethics question? Who was impacted?
If so, what did the practitioners and leaders miss?
What could have been done to mitigate the impact?

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What if Tay was supposed to make cancer recommendations, pick stocks for your retirement, recommend purchases, or schedule an appointment?

Article 5

Is there a business and data ethics question? Who was impacted?
If so, what did the practitioners and leaders miss?
What could have been done to mitigate the impact?

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Letting it loose with public info allowed the technology to be corrupted almost immediately.
However, once the scientist applies limitations to inputs, bias is introduced.

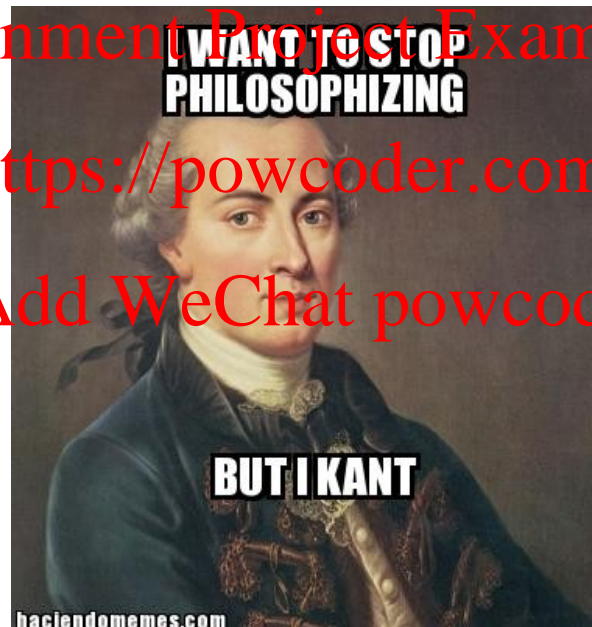
Some Popular Ethical Paradigms

Name	Proponent	Description	Example
Categorical Imperative	Kant	Make your action a universal law to see if it is ethical. Taken to an extreme, if the action becomes illogical, then it is immoral.	For stealing property...if everyone stole all property whenever they wanted then property itself loses all value making your act illogical. Therefore stealing is unethical.

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Some Popular Ethical Paradigms

Name	Proponent	Description	Example
Golden Mean	Plato/ Socrates/ Aristotle	Virtuous actions are between two extremes, deficiency and excess. At times, extremities are needed but mostly the middle (mean) is the moral choice.	Sometimes you should be courageous but not always...that would lead to a reckless death. Sometimes you need to be fearful but not always that would lead to unfulfilled opportunity as a coward.

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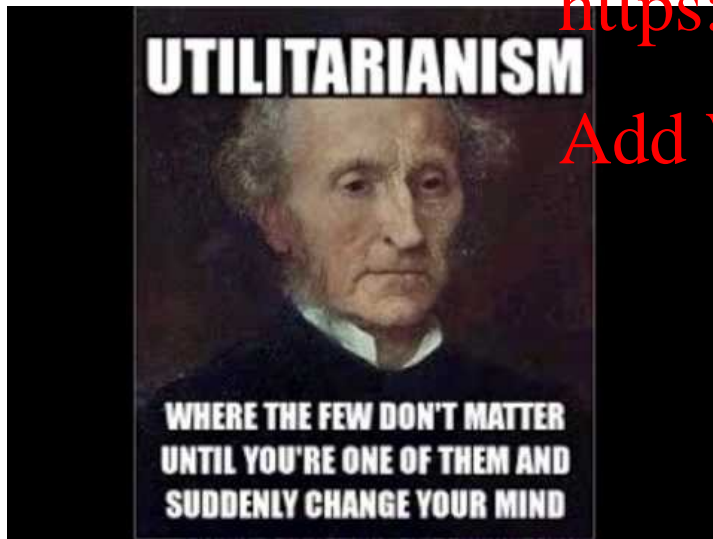
Some Popular Ethical Paradigms

Name	Proponent	Description	Example
Utilitarianism - Self – interest - Common Good	Mill	Ethical decisions are those that maximize happiness and minimize pain. “it’s ok to hurt a small group to maximize the gain for the larger group.”	Vaccines can cause significant problems so the government set up a fund to help victims of vaccine side affects. Vaccines benefit society by eradicating disease.

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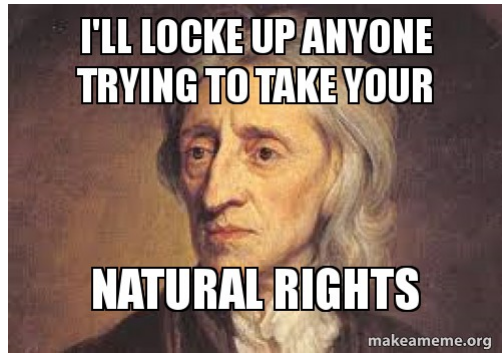
Some Popular Ethical Paradigms

Name	Proponent	Description	Example
Rights based	Locke	Humans beings are an “end” not a “means” and should be treated that way.	All human being have the right to dignity and other debated rights. Does this extend to animals? Conscience robots?

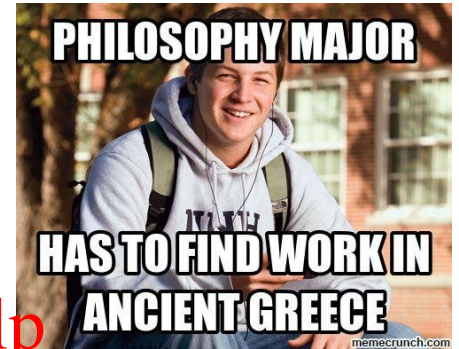
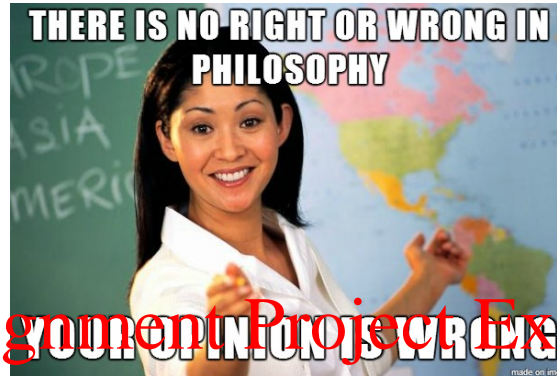
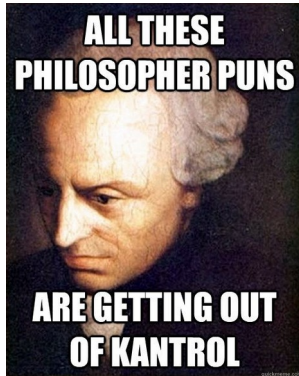
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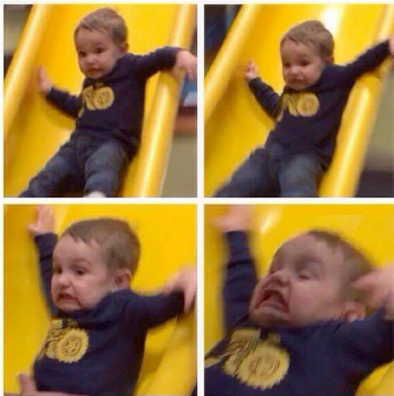
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Some Popular Ethical Paradigms



When you start writing about one philosophical topic and then realized it's intertwined with 9000 other ones



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Teacher: Turn to page 0.
hands raise
"But it's-"
Teacher: It's blank, like your future.
You were born to die.
Welcome to Philosophy 101.

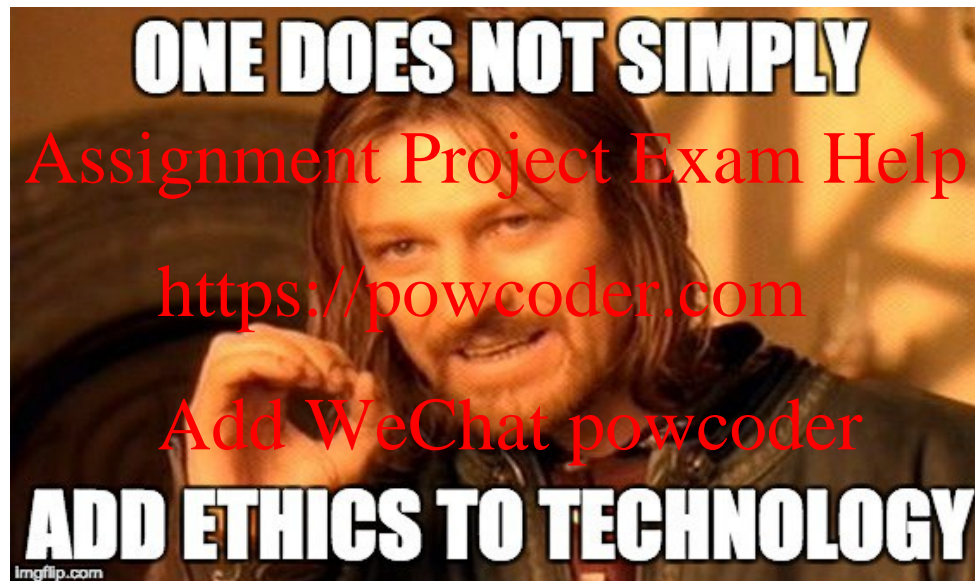


Take some time to reflect on how you would react and which of these (and others perspectives) resonate with you.

Popular Ethical Paradigms



As you become a business leader or technician, having predefined values will help you in the moment.



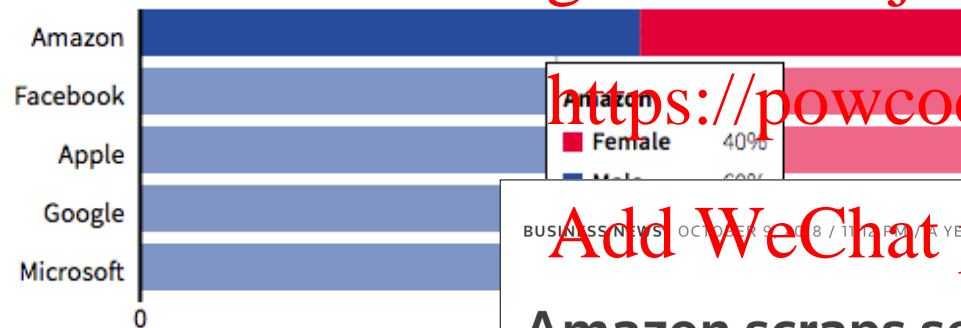
Technology is a means to an end. Stating data mining represents progress is misleading. What is the end achieved?

Ethical ML/AI

- Aligns to your organization's value

GLOBAL HEADCOUNT

■ Male ■ Female



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Amazon scraps secret AI recruiting tool that showed bias against women

Jeffrey Dastin

8 MIN READ



SAN FRANCISCO (Reuters) - Amazon.com Inc's (AMZN.O) machine-learning specialists uncovered a big problem: their new recruiting engine did not like women.



Ethical ML/AI

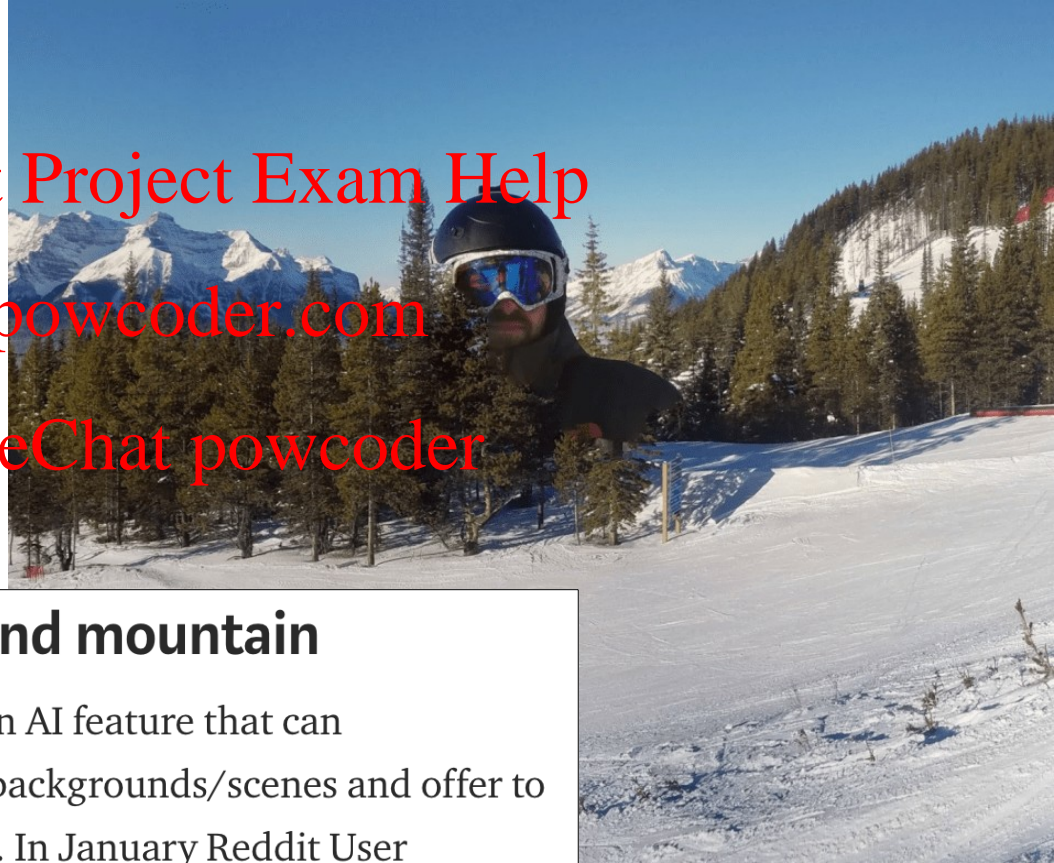
- Is Explainable & Intuitive (not necessarily transparent)



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Google Photo confuses skier and mountain

Google Photos includes a relatively unknown AI feature that can automatically detect images with the same backgrounds/scenes and offer to merge them into a single panoramic picture. In January Reddit User

Ethical ML/AI

- Behaves as expected



Ethical ML/AI

- Aligns to your organization's value
- Is Explainable
- Behaves as expected

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Having all 3 in a production model will help organizations realize value and mitigates risk.