

Alex Jacob

Professor Mathers

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Utilitarianism and its Implications

1)

Utilitarianism is essentially doing the action that makes the most people happy; even if it might not be the most right action. It is a way to justify if an action is morally right or wrong. Utilitarianism says that an action is morally right if it makes the greatest number of people happy; any other action would be morally wrong. Let's say it was the weekend, and you had some free time to do whatever you want. You could either study all day for your upcoming test, or you could go online and play video games with your friends. The latter of the two would make you happier, therefore it would make it the morally right action *even though* it would be more useful if you were to study for your test. Let's also say that there are 5 people who all have a certain lethal sickness and there are only 4 doses left of the cure. 1 of the 5 needs all 4 doses to live and the rest only need 1 dose. Utilitarianism says to let the needy individual die and save the rest since we are making $\frac{4}{5}$ of the people happy instead of $\frac{1}{5}$.

2)

Utilitarianism also implies that we should assist in getting rid of poverty. The reasoning behind this is that the money that we can give will make more people happier overall. Let's say for example we had 5 \$20 bills. You could be given all 5 and get the most happiness, or we could

give the 5 \$20 bills to charities/less fortunate individuals. Even though the item(s) remain the same, different people can get different levels of happiness.

3)

A utilitarian outlook on the morality of capital punishment(CP) can be compared to the outlook on Poor Jones because they run under the same basis: the large suffering of one or the minor disturbance of millions. The morality of CP is that they are removing heinous criminals from the general public, making the civilians feel safer. The Poor Jones example says that Jones must suffer pain for a temporary amount of time to prevent the disturbance of millions. Both of these examples prioritize the suffering of one (a criminal and Jones) over the disturbance of millions (the general public and the soccer game spectators), hence their outlook is also similar.