

What is ethics about?

1. Administrivia
2. You Asked
3. So...what is ethics?
4. Reflective Piece...your first thoughts



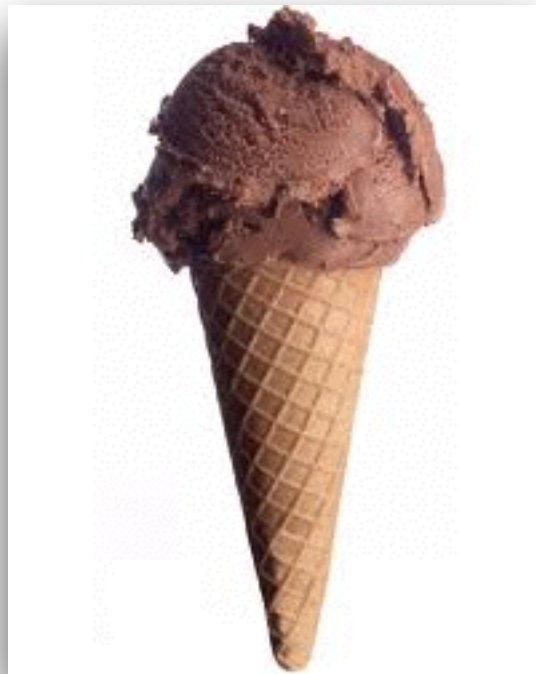
Fact :: Value
Prudential :: Ethical
Is :: Ought
Ethical :: Non Ethical



**Fact :: Value
Distinction**

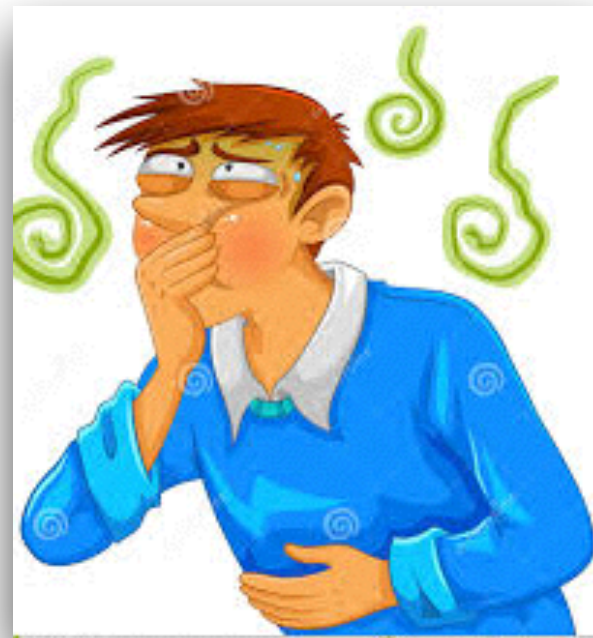


Fact



This is
ice cream

Value Judgement



Ice-cream is
disgusting

Fact



This is
Miley Cyrus

Value Judgement



Miley Cyrus is a
good role model

#

Four Distinctions



**Prudential :: Ethical
Distinction**





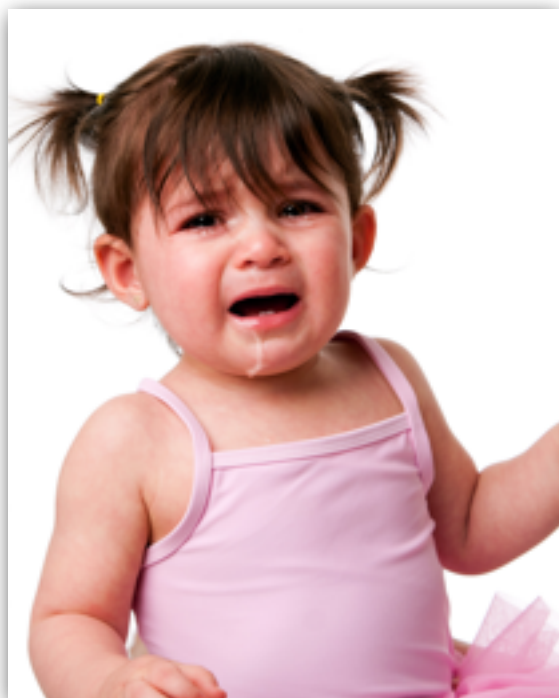
	Kid gives you her ice cream	Kid keeps her ice cream
(A) Offer to trade	9	2
(B) Don't offer to trade	3	1

Preference Ordering

9	No cup + ice cream
3	Meh...still have the cup
2	Horried at the selfishness
1	No ice cream, still have cup

Prudential Should...

You should trade If you are simply interested in what makes you happy

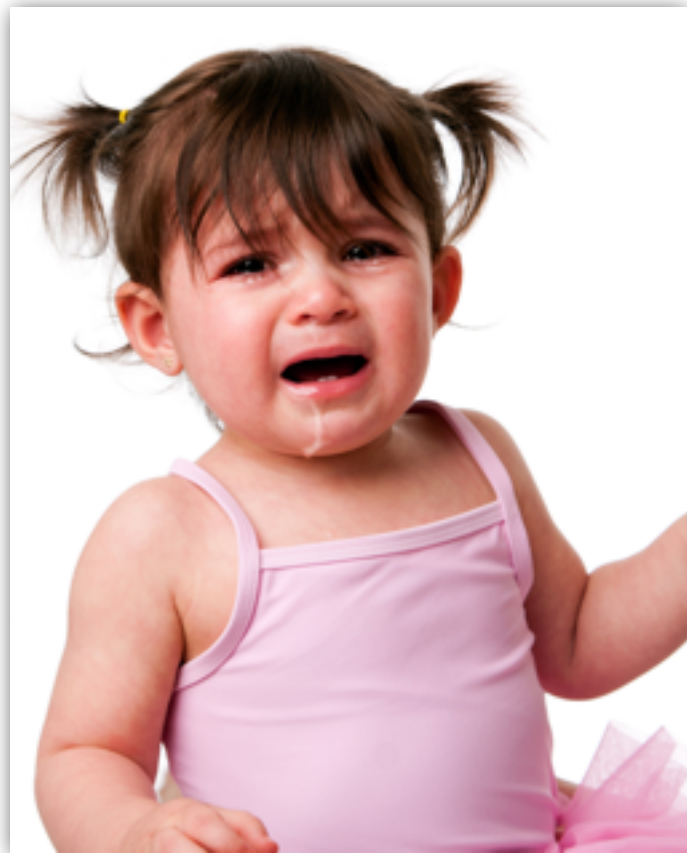
**Ethical Should...**

You should not trade If you are interested in being a good person





Victoria
Edmonton
Regina
Winnipeg
Toronto
Quebec City
Fredericton
Charlottetown
Halifax
St. John's



(A) Prudential

(B) Ethical

Reasons for & against

1. There is a large angry male walking towards you
2. Willingness does not imply consent
3. You don't like toddler spit on your ice cream
4. This type of behaviour is inconsistent with living in civil society



**Is :: Ought
Distinction**

**Is Claim:**

A description of what is the case

Ought Claim:

An ascription of what ought to be the case



You cannot
derive an ***ought***
from an ***is***

**Is Claim:**

Humans are the only animal that drink the milk of another animal

Ought Claim:

We should not drink the milk of another animal

**Is Claim:**

Humans are the only animal that use the internet

Ought Claim:

We should not use the internet

So how do we get
an ought statement?

We derive it from an
underlying moral theory



**Ethical :: Non-ethical
Distinction**



What is it that makes an action right or wrong?

What is the good?

What should we focus on in our moral deliberations?



Individuals constantly disagree about what's right and wrong, and societies do too



There are universal correct moral standards only if God exists. God doesn't exist...



Science tells us the truth about the world, and science says nothing about what's right and wrong...



If there were objective moral rules, then it would always be wrong to break them...



Russ Shafer-Landau

“

...it would be a serious mistake just to assume that morality is a fiction, or that personal or cultural opinions is the ultimate measure of what is right and wrong...

- Text, 4.

”



Russ Shafer-Landau

“

Some skeptics about morality deny that there are any proper starting points for ethical reflection. They believe that moral reasoning is simply a way of rationalizing our biases and gut feelings...

- Text, 5.

”



Russ Shafer-Landau

“

This outlook encourages us to be lax in moral argument and, worse, supports an attitude that no moral views are any better than others. While this sort of skepticism might be true...

- Text, 5.

”

1. Neither the law nor tradition is immune from moral criticism
2. Everyone is morally fallible
3. Friendship is valuable
4. We are not obligated to do the impossible
5. Children bear less moral responsibility than adults
6. Justice is a very important moral good

- 7. Deliberately hurting other people requires justification
- 8. Equals ought to be treated equally
- 9. Self-interest isn't the only ethical consideration
- 10. Agony is bad
- 11. Might doesn't make right
- 12. Free and informed requests prevent rights violations



Russ Shafer-Landau

“

Not only do we have a variety of plausible starting points for our ethical investigation, we also have a number of obviously poor beginnings for moral thinking...

- Text, 7.

”



Russ Shafer-Landau

“

A morality that celebrates genocide, torture, treachery, sadism, hostility, and slavery is, depending on how you look at it, either no morality at all or a deeply failed one.

- Text, 7.

”

First thoughts...

- 1) Are you a moral skeptic?
- 2) How would you respond to the moral skeptic?
- 3) Where does our moral knowledge come from?
- 4) What is ethics about?