Four ethical principles and their justifications *

INTRODUCTION

We have identified four ethical principles that lend support to research policies at land grant universities. But now we may ask, from whence do these principles come? And why should we accept them?

As scientific principles are grounded in scientific theories, so ethical principles are grounded in ethical theories. An ethical theory is a serious, non-contradictory, systematic, action-guiding and comprehensive philosophical system that brings our considered moral judgments into reflective equilibrium with all other sources of knowledge. A *good* ethical theory will have the following characteristics**:**

1. *Serious:* Ethical issues bother us; if a theory makes light of issues that concern us, we may wonder whether it is really a theory about ethical issues at all.[1]

2. *Non-contradictory:* A contradictory theory holds both: (a) and ~ (a), [where ~ (a) means "the opposite of (a)"]. Consider these contradictory statements:

   (a) It is always wrong to steal data.
   ~ (a) It is not always wrong to steal data.

   If a theory tells us that both a and its opposite are true, it is contradictory.

3. *Systematic:* The theory brings into reflective equilibrium the ordered triple:
   (a) considered moral judgments;
   (b) moral principles; and
   (c) all other sources of knowledge, both scientific and humanistic.

4. *Action-guiding:* Should help us figure out how to behave, giving guidance in situations of conflicting interests.

5. *Comprehensive*: The best theory will give coherent guidance on the widest possible range of ethical matters.

There are many ethical theories, including relativism, divine command, objective lists, social contracts, feminist, environmental, anti-theories, egoism, virtue, utilitarian, and moral rights. We will discuss the last four theories, those associated with the principles previously introduced.

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PRINCIPLE	THEORY
1. A person ought to do what is in *one's own* long-term best interests.	*Egoism*
2. A person ought to do what *their group* considers to be admirable, just, etc.	*Virtue theory*
3. A person ought to do what will maximize aggregate happiness and satisfy the interests of *all*.	*Utilitarianism*
4. A person ought to respect each individual's moral *rights*.	*Moral rights*

Theories, whether scientific or ethical, lend support to principles by providing systematic responses to key questions. Three central questions for any ethical theory are:

a. What is the ultimate good?
b. How should I act with respect to the good?
c. Why should I act ethically?

The first question asks: What things in the world are good? What things are bad? Is pleasure the ultimate good? The satisfaction of desires? Happiness? Exhibiting virtue? Respecting human rights?

The second question asks: Which actions are right? Which actions are wrong? Suppose a theory holds that the ultimate good is the satisfaction of desires. How then should we act so as to satisfy desires? Whose desires? Mine? Mine and my family's? The desires of everyone in my group? Everyone in my nation? All human beings?

Other questions arise here, as well. When there is a conflict of interests and we cannot satisfy everyone's desires--whose interests take precedence? Is the egoist correct that the satisfaction of one of my interests always counts for more than the satisfaction of anyone else's interest? An ethical theory should provide answers to these questions.

The third question asks: Why I should care? What motivation do I have to perform right actions in accord with the ultimate good? If I can get away with acting wrongly--get away, say, with cheating while hurting no one in the process--why should I not act wrongly?

As the last question is one of the most difficult, we begin with a theory that provides a powerful answer to it.

Egoism has no problem explaining why I should act ethically. The reason I should be moral is because so acting is in my own interest. If the good is what is in my interest and yet I act unethically then, by definition, I am harming myself, defeating myself. Egoism, acknowledging that each of us has our own different interests, asserts that each of us ought to do what is in our own best interest. Its practical advice is this: I should always focus on my ultimate goals and take the steps necessary to attain them. The major weakness with the theory is that it seems arbitrarily prejudiced toward one person’s interests (namely, mine).

Virtue theory expands the moral circle and helps us to answer question (a) above. The good is not simply what is good for me; rather it is what is good for the entire community in which I find myself. The good is the virtuous, and the virtues are values we have been taught by our loving parents, teachers, friends, and religions. Virtue theory holds that a person ought to perform those acts their group takes to exhibit good character: courage, honesty, integrity, responsibility. If virtue theory counsels us to focus on our kin, or group's rules, then professional codes appear to be examples of this theory insofar as they stress the group's virtues of fairness and law-abidingness. Its practical advice is this: We should always observe our profession's rules, being honest, fair, law-abiding, and responsible. A major weakness of the theory, however, is that it seems to make it impossible to criticize the values of one's group.

Utilitarianism expands the moral circle to include people outside the group, even strangers. It also provides a compelling answer to question (a), although a different answer from the answer given by virtue theory. For utilitarians, the good is, variously, pleasure, the satisfaction of all individuals' interests, or happiness. Utilitarianism holds that a person ought to do what will maximize the overall best consequences for everyone. It requires that one consider equally the like interests of all individuals affected by one's actions and act not to maximize the happiness of the group but rather the happiness of *all*. Its practical advice is this: Always give equal weight to the like interests of all individuals affected by our actions, acting to maximize the balance of good consequences over bad. A major weakness is that the theory seems to undervalue the weight of our special attachments to those nearest and dearest to us.

Like utilitarianism, *moral rights* theories continue the metaphor of an expanding moral circle. They insist, however, not on maximizing units of satisfaction or pleasure but rather on protecting the integrity of individuals. Insofar as this theory claims that *all* persons deserve equal treatment, it is an impartial theory like utilitarianism. It differs from utilitarianism, however, in insisting that individuals may not be used to achieve a greater good. Its practical advice is this: Never harm an individual in order to secure benefits for others, no matter how many benefits you might attain for the many by harming the few. The major weakness of this theory is that it seems to have a difficult time justifying the existence of moral rights.

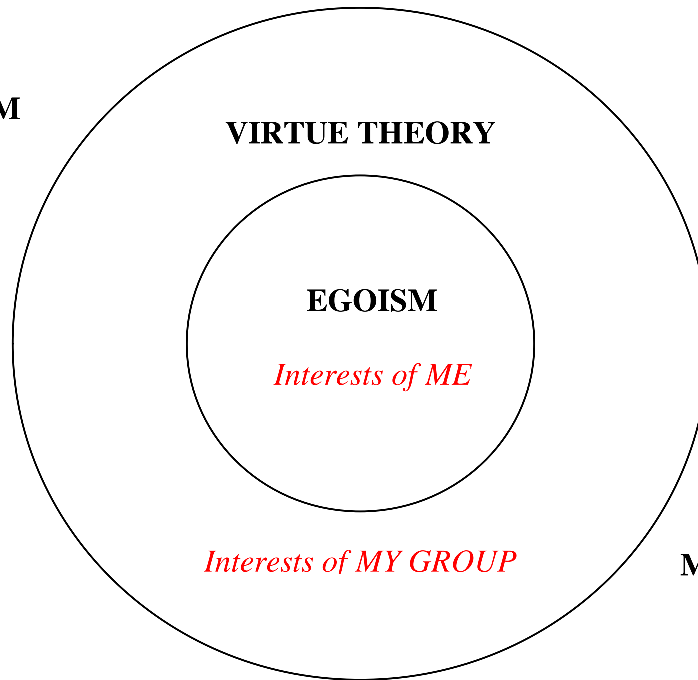

Table 1: Four ethical theories

Let us explore each theory in more detail.

1) Egoism: *My* interests

We have considered cases of misconduct in which researchers have falsely labeled photographs or plagiarized texts or fabricated data. We immediately recognized their actions as ethically deficient. Indeed, the culprits themselves admitted that their actions were wrong. But suppose, contrary to fact, the individuals did not care about what they had done. Suppose they were to respond to charges of misconduct by challenging the entire institution of ethics. Why, they might say, should I care about whether I act ethically?

The first theory we will discuss, ethical egoism, provides a strong answer to this question. The answer is that you defeat yourself by acting unethically. The ethical egoist has no problem explaining why someone should act in accord with the moral rules because the moral rules are defined by each individual. What is ethical is synonymous with whatever you decide is in your own interest. If you decide you want a career in biomedical engineering research, then you must publish papers and get grants. You cannot succeed in these areas, however, if you are caught falsifying photographs. If you are caught in a deed your colleagues deem "unethical" then you will be frustrated in your attempt to attain your career goals. For the egoist, to act unethically is nothing short of acting irrationally, that is, to fail to do what you want to do.

Ethical egoism lends support, then, to this principle:

> *A person ought to do what is in their best interests over the long run.*

Notice that this principle means more than "Watch out for Number One," or "Get away with whatever you can." Plagiarizing, the egoist would point out, is not in my long-term interests if the consequences and risks of being caught are severe. Since I should not do what is not in my long-term best interests, and since being caught plagiarizing will thwart me in my goals of publishing papers and getting grants, then I should not plagiarize.

You will not have missed the normative word "should" in the previous sentence. Ethical egoism is a moral rather than empirical theory and must be distinguished from psychological egoism. Psychological egoism is an empirical theory that claims that everyone always does what they want to do. That is, we always choose selfishly: all of our acts serve our own interests in the end. If this factual claim is true, and we can never voluntarily choose to do something for *someone else's sake*, then it is impossible to act altruistically. And if it is a psychological fact that we cannot act except in our own interest, then this is an important truth to know about ourselves.

However, we can raise many questions about psychological egoism. Is it true that mothers do not, cannot, sacrifice for their children? Have we not ourselves gone out of our way to help a friend attain their goals? Don't soldiers sometimes dive on hand grenades to save their buddies' lives? It seems that we are able on occasion to perform actions that serve someone else's interests. But psychological egoism denies this claim. It holds that no matter how self-effacing

an act may seem, the act is at bottom always self-centered: the mother *wants* to sacrifice for her children; the soldier *desires* to risk death as a martyr.

Whether psychological egoism is true is not our concern here. It is not our concern because it is not an ethical theory. It does not tell us what we ought to do. Ethical egoism, on the other hand, tells us that the following normative principle should guide us: I ought always to pursue my own best interests.

There is a deep wisdom in egoism insofar as it acknowledges the deep and subtle differences between each one of us. Elliott and Shamika have different goals and values, and those differences determine their distinct identities and characters. For Elliot to try to impose his goals on Shamika would be wrong. He does not want her telling him what he should do; consequently, he should not put himself in the position of imposing his goals and values on her. Watch out, says the egoist, only for yourself. A desirable side-effect of doing so will be that others will have maximal freedom to pursue the interests they have chosen for themselves. What others do, however, is none of the egoist's business. The sole focus here is on me and my interests.

Different graduate students have different goals when they choose a mentor with whom to work. Elliot may be aggressive and want a mentor who is intent on building reputations, his own and his student's. Suppose Elliot's interest in research is matched by his interest in networking with important figures in the field who can help him obtain a high-powered job and lofty salary. “Who cares," he thinks to himself, "if I like the research? I just want to get my publications and move on up."

Shamika, on the other hand, may want a mentor intent on preparing her to think creatively. Perhaps she is looking for a lab run by someone who will insure that she develops superb academic judgment and superb research skills. Imagine that she is an idealist who wants to devote her life to humanitarian ideals. "In the long run," she ruminates, "I want to do research that will improve the lives of children, make the world a more stable place. If the research is not inherently valuable," she says, "why do it?"

Students, like faculty, have different interests. Egoism instructs us that it is wrong for one person to force their values on others. The theory not only tells us that we always act in our own self-interest but, furthermore, that we *ought* to do so. I ought to do what I want to do.

If this advice sounds self-serving, if it sounds about as far from ethical advice as one could imagine, think again. Egoism does not counsel us to eat, drink, and be merry. Rather, it says: Distinguish your true, long-term interests from your ephemeral, short-term interests. Take aim at your best, long-term interests, and be prepared to sacrifice shorter-term, less important, interests.

What are our long term "best" self-interests? They are the interests that best integrate the widest number of the goals we deem most important. How do we discover what they are? Here's one way: Imagine yourself on your death bed reflecting on your life. From that perspective, review your values and accomplishments. Did you do the things you most wanted to do? Were you the good friend you wanted to be? Were you a good mother or father, or son or daughter? Did you attain the degrees you wanted? Finish the research, write the papers, influence the students,

contribute to your company, build your community, help to feed hungry children? Philosophers refer to these longer-term goals as "categorical interests." They form the ultimate context, the overarching category, within which we can rank order our lesser interests.

Compared to categorical interests, lesser interests, therefore, will always appear short-term even if they are more urgent. After a game of basketball on a hot day, I have a powerful interest in an icy energy drink. And I may want to satisfy it--I may have to satisfy it--before I can turn attention to the engineering software algorithm I have been writing up for three weeks. The longer-term interests are often more difficult to satisfy because, simply put, they are harder to satisfy than shorter-term desires. That is why we find that to get what we *really* want, we occasionally must over-ride some of our short-term desires. You ought not pursue your interest in drinking and playing cards tonight; you ought to study instead. Why? Because, responds the egoist, your longer-term "best" interest in getting an A on the exam takes priority--for you--over the shorter-term "lower" interests. While satisfying the short-term interests is often more pleasurable than satisfying the others, the short-term interests also stand in the way of getting what we desire in the long run. Egoism, not unaware of this painful fact, tells you to keep your eye on your ultimate goal.

Egoism also takes account of the fact that our interests vary from time to time and, even when they are all stable, they can shift in their rank and importance. Furthermore, we sometimes do not know what our actual values and interests are and--even when we are certain about them--we are not above deceiving ourselves. We say we have certain goals but then we act in ways that contradict our statements.

Consider the case of the graduate students at Princeton Theological Seminary who answered a request for research volunteers.[2] The students were told that they would participate in an experiment analyzing the human disposition to help others. Now, presumably, these seminarians were disposed to help others. But, when they saw the results of how they acted during the experiment, they were surprised.

Each student initially met with a psychologist who told the student that the student's job was to tape record a lecture in another campus building on the topic of the Good Samaritan. The Good Samaritan is a biblical tale about an injured man whose pleas for help are ignored by religious leaders who pass by him. On the way to the lecture, the psychologists have arranged for the students to pass a bloodied actor lying in an alley moaning for help. Before the student is sent across campus with the tape recorder, they are told that they are late and must hurry.

The seminarians, anxious to perform their duty, largely ignored the helpless man. As many as 90 percent of the students failed to offer any assistance whatsoever. Some even stepped over the victim in their rush to get to their assignment.

Prior to the experiment, the seminarians were asked to name their categorical interests. Many said they had dedicated their lives to helping others. Their ultimate goals presumably included pausing in the rush of their daily lives to assist others in dire need. Yet, when appropriate circumstances presented themselves, an unnerving percentage of individuals failed to act on the values they themselves had chosen. The egoist is fully aware of how easy it is to deceive oneself.

The theory tell me to think very carefully about what I want, and then it says that I should act in ways that are consistent with my decision.

Now we can see both why egoism has such a powerful answer to question (c), and why egoism is not reducible to the cliche, "do whatever you want." First, egoism instructs us to pursue our own interests, and to the extent that we want to lead meaningful lives, treating others with respect is usually essential to achieving our end. If I want, over the long haul, to receive a doctoral degree, then I am going to have to perform the actions necessary to accomplish that end. I seriously diminish my chances of accomplishing that end if I cheat, mislabel photos, or engage in other forms of research misconduct.

This is the sense in which egoism can insist that cheating is ethically wrong. Cheating is something I should not do *if* I find that cheating stands in the way of my satisfying more important goals.

Second, egoism does not counsel us to act on whatever interest is in our head at the moment. Momentary urges often conflict with our long-term desires. While many seminarians said that they thing they wanted most was to help others, they nonetheless had difficulty keeping their short-term interests from getting in the way of this objective. For these reasons, egoism could and would conclude that these seminarians acted wrongly in passing by the victim.

Egoism is a normative theory; it claims to tell us *what reasons should* guide our actions. We ought always to do the right thing for the right reason; egoism tells us that right actions are actions guided by an assessment of the means necessary to satisfy our own ends. Note, by the way, that this is the mark of a prudent person. The prudent person strives to act in a way so as to get what they want, have wanted, or will want.

The strength of egoism is in instrumental reasoning: reasoning in which we first decide upon the goal most important to us, and then try to find the means--the "instruments"--necessary to attain it. If I set as my goal the earning of a doctoral degree, then I must embrace as well the actions required to achieve it. These actions include observing the rules of excellent research: honest reporting of results, integrity in interpreting data, fairness in assigning authorship roles, and so on. In so reasoning, I am adopting the follow rule:

> *Given my categorical interest in* **y** *(e.g., obtaining a graduate degree) and the accompanying fact that doing* **x** *(e.g., conducting research responsibly) is necessary to obtain* **y***, then I ought to do* **x**.

Here is the formal normative principle egoism entails. Do what is necessary to achieve your ends. Those ends, after all, are *your* ends. From a motivational perspective, who can argue with that advice?

STRENGTHS

Egoism has two clear strengths: it provides a persuasive answer to the question of motivation, and it is consistent with evolutionary science.

1. PSYCHOLOGICAL MOTIVATION

Clearly, the theory provides great freedom in choosing our values. It encourages us to set our own definition of a meaningful life, and then insists that we follow the rules necessary to live that kind of life. The theory seems attractive and intuitively plausible in part because it has no motivational problem; indeed, it insists that we must never act on anyone's values except *our own*.

2. EVOLUTIONARY COHERENCE

The diversity and adaptatedness that humans manifest today is solely the result of successive rounds of random variation and natural selection. Natural selection has relentlessly shaped us for maximum fitness. In each new generation are individuals with new traits. When a new trait favors survival, the species population tends over time to shift in favor of the new characteristic.

When our ancestors on the African plain competed for the attention of mates, individuals indifferent to their own interests were at a decided disadvantage. If you didn't look out for yourself, no one would. Or, no one would for very long. And if you did not look out for yourself or were not very good at it, your chances of finding a partner willing to have children with you decreased dramatically. Individuals who watch out for themselves will obviously outcompete others. We have an evolved tendency, that is, to plan carefully--and to scratch and claw--to get the things we want.

Coherence with scientific theory is a point in favor of an ethical theory. And no ethical theory should ask us to assume things we know to be false. However, is coherence with a scientific theory sufficient to justify an ethical theory? The answer is no because claims about the state of the world do not suffice to justify claims about how the world ought to be.

This point is very important. The fact that the world is set up in a certain way--that I for example, have for whatever reason come to have a certain categorical interest--does not mean that the world ought to be set up that way--that I ought to have the categorical interest in question. Why is this so? Consider the implications were it not so.

A researcher, let's call him Dr. Olansky, becomes convinced that it is in his best long-term self-interests to determine the causes of syphilis. He imagines himself on his death bed reviewing letters from syphilitic men his research had saved from the dreaded disease. Called to a meeting in 1969 to review the U. S. Public Health Service syphilis trials at Tuskegee, Olansky is asked whether the goal of completely understanding the natural course of syphilis justifies continuing the withholding of penicillin from 399 African-American men in the study.[3] Olansky, an egoist, pauses to reflect on his ultimate goals. He regrets that the African-American men must suffer in the name of science, especially now that a cure--penicillin--is widely available and known to be effective. Olansky reasons, however, that many more men--thousands--would die were the research to be ended before all of the protocols are completed. If the research is ended "prematurely," therefore, he will not be able to save as many men as he would if the research

continues. He concludes, on the grounds of ethical egoism, that the experiment at Tuskegee should continue.

Notice how counter-intuitive is Olansky's conclusion in this case. We should not callously, knowingly, and willfully send patients to their deaths in medical research in the name of saving unnamed others. Yet, the egoist must affirm Olansky's decision. Not only does egoism tell Olansky that he is permitted to pursue his categorical interests by allowing the study to go forward. No, the theory has more onerous consequences: that Olansky *ought* to allow the study to go forward. And this consequence we find deeply offensive, entirely unacceptable.

The problem with egoism is that it tries to move illegitimately from empirical to normative claims. Here is a broader issue in ethical theory: "Is" does not imply "ought." The mere fact that the world is set up in a certain way does not justify, by itself, the claim that the world ought to be that way. Many whites on antebellum South Carolina plantations shared a religious mythology that justified slavery on biblical grounds. The sense of place peculiar to the plantation was indispensable to their categorical interests, they claimed. Their lives would be meaningful only if they continued to live on the plantation pursuing its economic activities and cultural ways of life. However, the mere fact that plantation dwellers have categorical interests that can be achieve only by enslaving black people constitutes no justification at all for the normative claim that whites *ought* to own blacks. So, the simple fact that egoism provides an empirically plausible story--a story that fits well with evolutionary theory--about how and why we are motivated to be ethical is not itself a sufficient reason to think that egoism is true.

WEAKNESSES

Like all of the ethical theories we will discuss, egoism has its problems. The primary worries are that it seems arbitrary, prejudiced, and unduly conservative.

1. ARBITRARY?

We have seen that egoism insists that we must never act on anyone's values except *our own*. The following problem has no doubt occurred to you by now: What if one's values include harming others? Egoism has no way to condemn such a person. If you have consciously chosen as your end a categorical interest that requires as one of its means the exploitation or domination of others, then egoism tells you that you are morally required to do so.

The problem here is that egoism undervalues impartiality. The theory divides the world into two groups, and then always privileges the first group's interests. White racists divide the world into whites and blacks and always privilege the first group arbitrarily. Egoists divide the world into two groups as well: *me* and *everyone else*. And they always privilege the first group arbitrarily. This attitude seems to be the very definition of prejudice, justifying a difference in treatment between the two groups that leads to unwarranted and unearned favors to the first group.

If we know anything about morality, it is that it is wrong to require a black woman to sit in the back of a bus simply because she is black, or to give my son a job simply because he is my son. In order to justify such actions, we must be able to identify some additional feature of the

favored person that justifies the difference in treatment. But there is no morally relevant difference between a black woman and a white woman, or my son and the person who actually deserves the job. Consequently, there is no reason to think that favoring white people or my son, or *me*, is justifiable.

Egoism seems to have an ineliminable arbitrary cast to it. On the one hand, the theory tells me always to favor my own interests. On the other hand, there is no principled difference to justify a difference in treatment when my interests and another's interests are similar. Therefore, while the theory provides a strong motive to be ethical, the motivation in the end seems thin and miserly, curved in upon itself.

2. UNDULY CONSERVATIVE?

Despite the pronouncements of egoism, we all seem to think that other people deserve our care--especially innocent, injured, people--even if caring for them is not in our self-interest. Egoism approves of what the Princeton students did when they walked by the injured man if the student had no interest in caring for the man. And this result seems counter-intuitive. Counterintuitive results are results that offend our deepest, critically considered, moral intuitions.

Egoism wants to "naturalize" morality, to reduce moral judgments to the terms of evolutionary biology and game theoretic accounts. But a price of doing so seems to be that morality then becomes identified with the status quo. And if morality is the same as whatever values happen to be present in the status quo, then how is moral progress possible? If the status quo bequeathed to us by evolution is inevitable and unchangeable, then when the status quo includes racism and sexism, then racism and sexism must be justifiable on moral grounds. And that seems wildly counterintuitive; a good reason perhaps to think that egoism is not a fully acceptable moral theory.

Egoism seems not to take our moral concerns seriously, and here it seems to fail the first test of a good ethical theory. When we hear someone tell us about an injured victim who has gone unaided, we feel disturbed by the story. But the egoist tells us there is no reason to be disturbed. If Annie doesn't have "care for other people" as one of her categorical interests, there is no reason for Annie to feel like she should care for others. And furthermore, no reason for us to be bothered if we hear that Annie has walked by someone she could help immensely with as simple and easy an act as calling someone to tell them about the victim. Here is the shortcoming of the theory. How can we accept egoism if it treats serious ethical problems as mere illusions?

To summarize, the major weakness with egoism is that it seems arbitrarily prejudiced toward one person’s interests (namely, mine). The next theory we will consider does not have this problem.

2) The virtues: *Our* interests

In virtue theory, the moral circle expands from the individual to the group, from "me" to "those for whom I care."

Although we have moved from my interests to my group's interests, we have not broken ranks with evolutionary theory. Evolutionary theory holds that the individuals most likely to succeed in passing on their genes to the next generation will be those who not only watch out for themselves but who also watch out for their sexual mates and offspring. The evolution of mammals, whose offspring take many years to mature, favors parents willing to sacrifice some of their own interests in favor of the interests of their child (or willing to sacrifice, at least, long enough for their descendants to live to the age of reproductive maturity).

In sum, evolution does not favor individuals who act *only* on their own interests. Extremely self-centered individuals lose out in the reproductive race to individuals with a key advantage, the trait of caring for the interests of their sexual mates and offspring. Granted, someone who pursues only their own interests will outcompete someone who does not care for themselves. However, someone who pursues their interests only is less likely to pass on their genes than someone who pursues as well the interests of their kin, and especially the interests of their direct descendants and the descendants of their brothers and sisters. As evolution favors individuals with an interest in the values and rules of their group, we might say (with appropriate cautions about the invalidity of moving from an "is" to an "ought") that the science here favors virtue theory over egoism.

Virtue theory holds that:

> *A person ought to do what their group admires and values in persons of good character.*

Persons of good character possess virtue, that is, traits of character acted on habitually that are good for a person to have. In a group, it is good for individuals to have traits that advance the group's interests. And what traits are those? The virtues: self-control, courage, generosity, and truthfulness. Civility, thoughtfulness, tolerance, and loyalty. Self-reliance, prudence, compassion, and conscientiousness.

It is easy to explain why these traits are good given the assumption that we naturally form and live in groups. In groups, we must deal with other's emotions, so self-control--the ability to exercise restraint over one's own impulses--is a virtue. In groups we must withstand threats, physical and psychological, from others, so courage--the moral strength to resist hardship without being rash--is a virtue. In groups we must deal with others' foibles and slights, so generosity--the trait of having a forebearing spirit and a propensity to give liberally--is a virtue. In groups we encounter all manner of rude people and thoughtless acts, so civility--the art of courtesy and politeness--is a virtue. So are tolerance, compassion, and conscientiousness virtues--and for similar reasons.

It would be difficult if not impossible for us to flourish as social creatures if the virtues were not found, at a minimum, in the group's leaders. The virtues are the traits that individuals living in groups--that is, almost all of us--must continuously exhibit and teach to their young if we are together to flourish as characteristically human beings, that is, if we are communally each to achieve our categorical interests.

Each of us is either in a group of professionals or studying to enter the guild. As we have seen, professions evolved to promote social goods. How could a member of a profession succeed if that person did not care about promoting the good of persons beyond their immediate circle of acquaintances?

We know from personal experience that looking after our own best interests almost always means that we must also look after other's interests. If our friends are unhappy, we are unhappy. Many of us were raised by wonderful parents; we want them to be happy. Some of us have children; we want them to have friends, to have success, to form categorical interests that, if fulfilled, will be satisfying for them--and good for others.

Similarly, we have important interests that we share with others in our various research professions. Because honest communication of results is critical to any group doing research, mislabeling photos and fabricating data cannot be allowed. Because writing an article is not only a key means to communicate new findings but also a way to establish oneself as a member of a research group, plagiarizing is not allowed. So with breaking the law, double-dipping on one's salary from a grant, misrepresenting the implications of one's research, or cruelly exploiting animals in one's lab. The virtues of the research community--the sorts of thing that honest, just, good persons do--just are the kinds of things we find summarized in our professional codes.

Virtue ethicists emphasize that it is more important to cultivate character traits than to specify obligatory actions (i.e., what one should or should not do). They also point out that even though groups differ somewhat in their peripheral values, there is considerable overlap of core values. Courage, honesty, respect for elders, kindness toward offspring, and fairness all are traits admired and encouraged in every group managing to endure for more than one or two generations. There is, then, a sense in which virtue theory identifies traits that are not necessarily relative to this group or that group but, rather, are universal, found in all groups. (We wish to note that this claim about the universality of the virtues is controversial with some virtue theorists. But so is our prior, and somewhat contrary, claim, that virtue ethics is not a universal morality but rather is relative to the standards of different groups. We are happy to report that in neither case is the controversy important for our introductory purposes here.)

STRENGTHS

Virtue theory has several strengths.

CODES

Virtue theory helps us to understand the value of codes in our lives. Professional codes in particular reflect the ethical deliberation of groups over time and are the distillation of years of

experience of wise individuals who have dealt with all manner of professional conflicts. Wise persons resolve conflicts not by taking up every new problem as if it were their first, but rather by seeing analogies between new cases and prior cases, and acting on rules that have become second nature to them. The skill of the wise person is in seeing the details of each case, and in being able to know which features of situations are most relevant for making good decisions.

Because professions share certain features, all professional codes recommend certain behaviors: obey the law, be honest, respect our fellow professionals, conduct ourselves with integrity, promote the social good, and so on. For example, the physicists' code, found in the American Physical Society's Guidelines for Professional Conduct, contains this sentence:

> Fabrication of data or selective reporting of data with the intent to mislead or deceive is an egregious departure from the expected norms of scientific conduct, as is the theft of data or research results from others.

And a similar injunction is found in the National Society of Professional Engineers's Code of Ethics for Engineers:

> Engineers shall be objective and truthful in professional reports, statements or testimony. They shall include all relevant and pertinent information in such reports, statements or testimony, which should bear the date indicating when it was current.

Why do these codes contain such similar admonishments not to depart from "expected norms" of the community? One reason follows. Contemporary society is complex and subtle. If a profession is to succeed in the modern world, its members must constantly rely on the validity of messages each member is receiving. Often, professionals must trade large sets of information back and forth along with the most subtle of instructions about how the information ought to be interpreted. Today, the existence of a profession is only possible because members successfully communicate; and accomplished communication in turn requires that all parties observe basic norms.

Trust is one of these norms. If one professional is unable to trust what another has said, then neither will know how to proceed. The very fabric of professional life will be ripped apart as the expeditious processing of claims grinds to a halt. Without trust, none of us would know how to proceed in attempts at communication. The most rudimentary of professional exchanges, therefore, requires shared values and assumptions. We call these values virtues and find them in virtually all of our professional codes.

As different as our various professional groups are, and as different as their ethical codes may be, they have a high degree of overlap. It is fair to say they share more points in common than points over which they differ. Considered as a group, each profession has a code that emphasizes core elements of the group's common morality: be fair and honest; act with integrity and responsibility; do not harm others; do not accept bribes. In sum, the actions recommended by our codes are traits of character widely agreed upon to be good traits to have.

MOTIVATION

Like egoists, virtue theorists do not have a problem with motivation. Or, more precisely, virtue theorists do not have a problem with motivation so long as the individual recognizes that they are a social being. The satisfaction of the categorical interests of one social being depend on the satisfaction of the categorical interests of other social beings. This is the reason that our professional codes emphasize the importance of values essential to the well-functioning of groups: honesty, transparency, integrity, responsibility. We learn how to develop the virtues in part by observing and imitating good people. For virtue theory, it is more important to understand the standards of excellence that good people in your group possess than to expend your energies pursuing your own narrow interests.

WEAKNESSES

The theory seems to have two problems.

PROVINCIAL?

Virtue theory may entail that my group or profession cannot be wrong in the values it admires. The reason is that, according to at least one interpretation of the theory, there is no universal set of virtues against which my group's virtues can be judged.

For example, not all societies admire all of the virtues listed above. In some societies, certain virtues are deemed central to the life well lived, and yet other societies do not value those traits at all. Chastity is an important trait for some groups but peripheral at best for other groups. When conflicts arise over whether a virtue *is* a virtue, or which virtue should take precedence in cases of conflicts between two virtues, how does the theory resolve the dilemma? The answer is not clear because virtue theorists typically argue that virtues are specific to given groups, implying that there is no such thing as a necessary and sufficient list of universal virtues. But, what, then should we make of the fact that some groups criticize the alleged virtues of other groups?

A follower of virtue theory may be unable to criticize the values they inherent from their group.

ACTION-GUIDING?

Virtue theory also seems somewhat vague when it comes to providing guidance in situations of genuine dilemmas. Suppose a group makes honesty a supreme virtue. But are there not situations in which other virtues should take precedence? Compassion recommends in some instances that one not tell a dying person that they are dying. Suppose a dying person has asked not to be told when the end is near. Should honesty take precedence over compassion? How would we decide? We may always ask, *what makes* honesty good? And, if what makes honesty good makes honesty better than compassion, why is this so? How do we rank order the virtues in cases of conflict?

One would think that the practical knowledge possessed by the virtuous persons could be expressed in propositional form. Most virtue theorists deny this. They explain that virtuous people know how to handle cases of conflict and the task of the non-virtuous or not yet wise person is to imitate the virtuous person rather than try to acquire the virtuous persons' knowledge.

But why should this be? One would think that the virtuous person could tell us the principles that guide their action in conflict situations, could give us insight into the knowledge of the good that they possess. Having such knowledge would be beneficial to all because it would enable the rest of us--the not so wise--to learn the principles, or at least the way of perceiving situations, that the virtuous use. When a courageous person responds courageously, what are they seeing in the situation, what clues are they picking up, that helps them to know how to respond, to avoid reacting either in fear or in rashness? By explicating for us the wise person's knowledge, virtue theory could be both less vague and more applicable to situations in which interests conflict.

Take another case of conflicting interests. How would virtue theorists handle cases such as the following?

In 1998, Bayer AG petitioned the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for permission to proceed with a clinical trial of a pesticide called azinphosmethyl (AZM) proposed for use in controlling nonbeneficial worms and insects in crops. The company proposed to give the pesticide in small doses to paid human research subjects. Each participant would be fully informed about all potential risks. The research protocol was constructed so that each of the following criteria would be satisfied:

- Informed consent of all individuals would be obtained.
- All persons bearing risks would be informed of all risks (the risks appear minimal).
- All research subjects would be compensated for assuming the risks.

None of the participants' basic human rights would be violated in this case. Now, using virtue theory as a guide, should the EPA grant the Bayer AG petition? It is difficult to see what guidance virtue theory can provide. Suppose you are a member of the EPA panel and decide that it would be unjust to give research subjects doses of pesticide, no matter how small, even if the subject has given informed permission. Could not another virtue theorist reach the opposite conclusion? What is to keep a virtue theorist from arguing that it is unjust to deny the companies the use of a potentially benign chemical if doing so will cut food costs for consumers and help keep farmers to stay in business by reducing the price of agricultural chemical inputs?

However one decides the case, is our ultimate decision going to turn on a virtue? Or will it turn instead on some characteristic that makes one virtue more important than another, such as an estimate of the costs and benefits of the research?

Virtue theory is an important theory in calling attention to the motives that animate our choices and in insisting that we do things for the right reasons. At best, however, it seems like an incomplete theory because it does not provide guidance in difficult conflict of interest cases.

Virtue theory seems to need assistance from a complementary theory, a theory that would help us think through the potential consequences of our actions.

To such a theory we now turn.

3) Utilitarianism: Interests of *all*

The ethical theory best suited to help us think through the consequences of our action and to provide guidance in cases of public policy conflicts is an egalitarian theory that insists we rank equally the like interests of every human being. Utilitarianism holds:

> *A person ought to do what will maximize aggregate happiness in the world.*

As plagiarizing will not maximize the ratio of good consequences (pleasure, happiness) over bad consequences (pain, unhappiness)--and since we should not produce an overall ratio of bad consequences--we should not plagiarize. What should we do? We should maximize good consequences. And what are good consequences? The answer depends on what we understand the good to be. If the only thing intrinsically valuable is pleasure, and the only thing intrinsically bad is pain, then happiness is maximized when the world contains the greatest overall net balance of pleasure over pain.

On the other hand, if the only intrinsically valuable is achieving our categorical interests, and the only thing intrinsically bad is being frustrated in achieving them, then happiness is maximized when the world contains the greatest overall net balance of individuals achieving an integrated satisfaction of their preferences over the long-term. There are two kinds of utilitarianism; the first is called hedonism, from the Greek word for pleasure. It holds that an individual is happy to the extent that they experience pleasure and do not experience pain. The second sort is called preference-based utilitarianism. It holds that an individual is happy to the extent that they achieve their categorical interests

We criticized virtue theory for not giving us guidance on the human pesticide trial case. How would we proceed to think about this problem if we were to approach it as a classical utilitarian? Let us assume for present purposes that we are hedonistic utilitarians, that is, that the only intrinsically good thing in the world is pleasure and the only intrinsically bad thing is pain. Here then is our basic rule:

> Always maximize aggregate pleasure in the world. To maximize pleasure, perform action *A* if and only if the balance of pleasure over pain that will be in the world if you do *A* is greater than the balance that will be in the world if you perform any act other than *A*.

To apply this rule to the human pesticide case, begin to calculate as follows.

1. Assume that each unit of pain has a value of -1.

2. Assume that each unit of pleasure a value of +1.

3. Identify all individuals (including animals) likely to experience pain or pleasure as a consequence of each contemplated action.

4. Add up all of the numbers, positive and negative.

For example, suppose we have closely examined the protocols proposed for the human pesticide experiment and concluded that the trial will not pose significant risks to anyone. We further believe that it will probably bring substantial benefits to farmers and consumers. Now suppose that there are two different ways of conducting the experiment. Under the first design, call it "Action A," our experiment we will result in 3 units of pain to one individual in the experiment, and eighteen units of pleasure to three farmers. Under the second design, "Action B," we have 4 units of pain to the first individual and the same eighteen units of pleasure to the farmers.

We can depict the scenario in the preceding paragraph as follows.

	Individual 1	Individuals 2, 3 and 4	Total
Action A	-3	+18	+15
Action B	-4	+18	+14

Remember that for hedonistic utilitarians:

The right action is always the action with the greatest balance of pleasure over pain.

Therefore, the right action in this case must be A. The reason is that Action A has a greater balance of pleasure over pain than Action B.

There are two ways to measure, or aggregate, happiness: total and average.[4] In both instances we consider all possible courses of action and then choose the one that achieves the greatest overall level of happiness. In the first, we total all happiness without regard for who is happy or happiness is distributed. In the second, we consider only average happiness, so that the distribution of happiness—who is happy and who is not—becomes more important than simply maximizing totals.

Notice how the two forms of measurement will affect policy decisions. Suppose we are debating proposals for policies that may effect the number of people in existence. Suppose, too, that the amount of average and total happiness in the world increases along with an increasing number of people. Increases, that is, with one exception. After reaching a certain point, the sheer number of people on the globe begins to make life miserable for everyone and the average happiness begins to decline even as the number of people continues to increase. Under these assumptions, which are not at all implausible to hold, utilitarians who think we should maximize average happiness will have good reasons to want to restrict population growth at some point. And their reasons are reasons that “totalizing” utilitarians will not have.

Greatest total v. greatest average utility

Population:	100	200	400	800	1600	3200
Average happiness:	10	10	9.99	7	4	1
Total happiness:	1000	2000	3996	5600	6400	3200

Table 2: Total versus average utilitarianism

In the scenario depicted in Table 2, the greatest average utilitarianism calls for halting population growth at 200, because average happiness is at its maximum level of 10. The average utilitarian could not, however, regard 400 people as an optimal level because average happiness has declined to 9.99. Given the admittedly very simple assumptions of this thought-experiment, the average utilitarian must conclude that the ideal population level is 200.

On the other hand, greatest total utilitarianism calls for an increase in population from 200 to 800. The reason is that whereas total happiness with 200 people is at 2000, and with 400 people at 3996, it reaches 5600 with 800 people. Indeed, the total utilitarian is committed to approving a population level of 1600, where total happiness is at 6400.

Comparing the results of the 200 and 400 population levels illustrates the shortcoming of average utilitarianism. Even though we could double the number of happy people in the world with only a miniscule drop in average happiness of 0.01, average utilitarianism will not allow 400 people because the extra people come at the cost of average happiness. This consequence seems miserly at best.

Comparing the results of the 200 and 1600 population levels illustrates the shortcoming of total utilitarianism. Even though every person's level of happiness at the 1600 level is less than half of what it was at the 200 level—and no one, we may presume, is living a happy life at all at the 4.0 level--total utilitarianism requires us to increase population from 200 to 1600 because the total keeps going up. Here is a vivid illustration of utilitarianism's failure to appreciate the separateness and integrity of persons. When a theory tells us that the unalterable and unending miserable existence of 1600 people is to be preferred to the flourishing and happy existence of 200 people, something must be wrong with the theory.

STRENGTHS

Utilitarianism has many strengths.

INTUITIVELY PLAUSIBLE

Utilitarianism is intuitively plausible in holding that pleasure or happiness is intrinsically valuable and pain and unhappiness intrinsically disvaluable. We do not like pain because it hurts; we like pleasure because it feels good.

ACTION-GUIDING

Utilitarianism provides a clear method for making policy decisions: risk / benefit analysis. Indeed, this method is the method of choice for making decisions in contemporary US policy. Therefore, utilitarianism is an extraordinarily powerful tool of contemporary society.

IMPARTIAL

Utilitarianism also follows from the intuition that we ought to *treat people equally*; it insists that my pain or pleasure does not count for any more than your pain or pleasure. No matter what your race, gender, religion, or age, utilitarianism requires that *Jorge* counts *equally* with *George* (and everyone else). It is an impartial theory.

BENEFICENCE

Utilitarianism also follows from the intuition that we have a social duty to do good--minimizing harm, maximizing happiness--and to *make the world a better place.* It is a beneficent theory.

<u>WEAKNESSES</u>

Utilitarianism seems to have two major weaknesses.

EXCESSIVE DEMANDS?

Utilitarianism seems to impose extraordinarily demanding duties, making us responsible for the welfare of everyone on the face of the planet, even strangers residing in countries with which we have no agreements or treaties. On this score, the theory seems to overvalue impartiality. Is it not the case that the happiness of our family and friends not only matters more to us than the happiness of strangers but, furthermore, that our family's happiness should matter more?

JUSTICE?

Utilitarianism seems to ignore matters of justice, human rights, and the distribution of benefits. Anyone who cares about the virtue of justice seeks to respect persons and their moral rights. And yet utilitarianism does not take persons into account; it seeks only the maximization of pleasure or happiness, irrespective of who gets the pleasure and who gets the pain.

By aggregating, utilitarianism seems not to respect the fact that we as persons are separate beings and our welfare matters to us as individuals. The theory, unconcerned with questions of justice and how the good is distributed, does not take into account what is called the separateness of persons.

Theories that insist on the separateness of persons and the centrality of justice are called moral rights theories. In conclusion, then, let us turn our attention to this tradition of ethical thought.

CLASS EXERCISE:

Imagine you, a utilitarian, are on the review board of the Environmental Protection Agency. You must decide whether to allow Bayer AG's request to test pesticides on humans.

1. What information would you require that Bayer AG provide before making your decision?

2. As a utilitarian, what would be your final decision?

4) Moral rights: *Rights* of all

We have seen that in trying to maximize aggregate happiness, utilitarians seem not to care about the way happiness is distributed. Moral rights theorists reject utilitarianism for this reason. They claim we have moral duties and obligations, constraints built into the fabric of the universe the way gravity and entropy are built into the fabric of the universe. These constraints provide the boundaries within which we are allowed to maximize good consequences. The constraints are generated by the fact that we are autonomous beings, beings with free will who can make choices on the basis not only of our wants and desires, but also on the basis of reasons. Rational beings are owed a certain kind of respect compatible with their intrinsic value and special ability to renounce instinct and self-interest and act altruistically and benevolently.

Moral rights theorists aim to protect innocent human beings from having their interests sacrificed in the name of the greater good. Rights are like fences surrounding individuals, shielding them from trespasses by others. Such rights are absolute and fundamental; where moral rights exist, they cannot be over-ridden by other considerations. We cannot be used, as utilitarians would use us, as means to maximize some abstract good.

Moral rights theories hold that:

> *We ought always to act so that we treat persons as ends-in-themselves, and never only as a means to some end.*

This theory provide a powerful response to question (b) above: How ought we to act with respect to the good? Rights theorists hold that the good is the integrity and intrinsic value of each person and that we should always act in ways that show respect for persons. Rights theorists acknowledge that each person has the ability to make their own choices and insist that each of us is entitled to decide for ourselves how to behave, basing our decisions on considerations of our duties and obligations. Such theorists advise us never to harm individuals or over-ride their rights even if by so doing we could secure much larger benefits for a much larger number of individuals.

Unfortunately, we know of horrifying experiments done in the name of the greater good that violated human rights. Prisoner doctors at Auschwitz related an account of twin young boys from Hungaria who were subjected to excruciating treatment in late 1943. The Nazi, Dr. Mengele, forcibly distended their rectums without anesthesia; excised tissue samples from their kidney and prostate, then killed them by injection to the heart. The justification given for the experiment was to try to discover basic scientific knowledge about physiological processes in order to assist treatment of injured German soldiers.[5]

The Nuremberg War Criminal Trials held Mengele accountable for his deeds. The Nuremberg Code of 1947 requires that all humans used in research must give their voluntary informed consent to any procedures done upon them. The Code stipulates that persons should have legal capacity to give consent; should be so situated as to be able to exercise free power of choice, without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, over-reaching, or other ulterior form of constraint or coercion; and should have sufficient knowledge and comprehension of the elements of the subject matter involved as to enable him to make an understanding and enlightened decision. Furthermore, the duty and responsibility for ascertaining the quality of the consent rests upon each individual who initiates, directs or engages in the experiment.

Rights arguments always defeat utilitarian arguments. Basic human rights, therefore, are like trump cards. In card games, when diamonds are the trump suit, the lowly 2 of Diamonds will beat the Queen, King, or Ace of Spades. Similarly, according to this conception of moral rights, arguments based on rights always defeat utilitarian arguments. Even if great consequences will come to 100 people by trampling on one person's rights, the 100 are not justified in exploiting the one person for their own ends.

Where do moral rights come from? They are grounded in the metaphysical characteristics of what it is to be a *person*. Persons are autonomous agents, capable of making free choices. To be autonomous and make choices is to be able to exercise control over your own life and welfare. To be capable of exercising control over your own life is to be deserving of respect.

How to proceed as a moral rights theorist:

1. Remember that right actions are actions that *respect persons* and their autonomy.
2. To respect a person is not to violate their bodily integrity or choice-making ability.
3. Identify all parties likely to have their rights violated by some action.
4. Distinguish between basic rights, legal rights and social roles.
5. Always act so as not to violate basic rights.

As noted in our first reading, moral rights differ from legal rights. Whereas moral rights are established by our duties and obligations, legal rights are established by legitimate cultural authorities. Legitimate cultural authorities may not always enshrine in law protections for all of an individual's moral rights.

The UN Declaration of Human Rights (1948) proclaims the following legal rights of individuals:

- the right to legal recourse when their rights have been violated, even if the violator was acting in an official capacity
- the right to life
- the right to liberty and freedom of movement
- the right to equality before the law
- the right to presumption of innocence til proven guilty
- the right to appeal a conviction

- the right to be recognized as a person before the law
- the right to privacy and protection of that privacy by law
- freedom of thought, conscience, and religion
- freedom of opinion and expression
- freedom of assembly and association

The UN Declaration is a legal document that identifies many moral rights. Many of the rights in the Declaration are "negative" rights, valid claims we have against others that they not interfere as we pursue our interests. Such rights may be defined as follows:

> *If it is true that a person P has a right to X, then it would be wrong to deprive P of X or to prevent A from Xing on purely utilitarian grounds.*

George's having a right to freedom of expression, for example, means that no one may interfere with him when he is expressing himself.

Let us return to the pesticide trial. Did this experiment violate any (legal or moral) human rights? Suppose the experimental protocol could not insure that the research subjects were fully informed about risks. Imagine that the experiment must determine the threshold level of toxicity for children under age 6 exposed to AZM. Suppose further that the requirement of obtaining a sufficient number of children for statistically valid results required that some children be used in the study whose parents were incapable of understanding the trial's actual risks. Imagine finally that these parents give "informed consent" for their children to be given AZM and yet the researchers themselves do not believe that the parents understand the risks.

If these were the facts of the AZM trial, would rights theorist approve? No. Children are a vulnerable population subject to special protections in clinical trials precisely because they are not yet autonomous and cannot understand scientific explanations. Therefore, their parents are the guardians of the children's rights. If the parents are unable to understand the risks of harm being proposed, then using the children violates the children's rights, even if the children's parents have given permission.

This conclusion holds for rights theorists even if we assume that the level of risk from AZM exposure is negligible and the experiment is certain to produce great social goods for farmers and consumers. For rights theorists, such consequences are irrelevant. The amount of social good produced does not suffice to justify experiments--even if the benefits outweigh the costs one hundred--or one thousand, or one hundred thousand--to one. The situation here is not like it is in utilitarianism, in which ends justify means. The ethical rightness or wrongness of an act depends solely on the means: whether rights are being violated and whether persons are being respected, irrespective of any consequences.

STRENGTHS

Moral rights theories clearly recognize the separateness of persons and guard the freedom and autonomy of all individuals with free will.

Is this theory serious and non-contradictory? Yes. It provides a single – very strict – answer to the cases: honor human rights and respect persons. Is it systematic? Yes, the answers it gives to particular cases seem to be in reflective equilibrium with our considered moral judgments. Is it action-guiding? Yes, moral rights theory gives clear, unambiguous, guidance about how the pesticide experiment should be decided. Is it comprehensive? Not clear. We have only considered one case. We would have to press on to see how the theory dealt with other cases.

WEAKNESSES

Moral rights theories seem to have two weaknesses.

JUSTIFICATION OF RIGHTS?

How are moral rights justified? Because rights are so powerful, there must be powerful corresponding arguments to explain where they come from and how they are justified. The utilitarian Jeremy Bentham thought moral rights were "nonsense on stilts," and contemorary utilitarians argue that all attempts to explain the derivation of rights come up short.

SCOPE OF RIGHTS

If one must be autonomous to have moral rights, then people who are not autonomous (young children, the severely mentally impaired, patients with Alzheimer's and advanced dementia) do not have moral rights. But denying moral rights to some of the weakest members of the human community seems counter-intuitive. The scope of rights may be too narrow.

CONSEQUENCES IRRELEVANT?

Does the moral rights theory undervalue the consequences of our actions? Would it not be permissible to lie if the consequence of not lying was that an innocent person would die? And, in any case, isn't it simply intuitively correct that in some cases, consequences to society of policy x are so beneficial that we are justified in overriding an individual's "right" to prevent policy x ?

LOOKING AHEAD

We have noted that these four ethical theories, whatever their shortcomings, are important guides for action. How can we use them to make good decisions? To that matter we now turn.

Notes

[1] An excellent online resource for the topics discussed in these pages are Sally Haslanger's notes for her MITcourse, "Problems of Philosophy," at http://ocw.mit.edu/NR/rdonlyres/Linguistics-and-Philosophy/24-00Problems-of-PhilosophyFall2001/FA990113-7707-4E00-A4FD-0DC1DF2FACDF/0/fa01lec16.pdf. Accessed 3/7/06. Also see James Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy, 3rd ed.* (Boston: McGraw Hill, 1999).

[2] Darley, J. M., and Batson, C.D., "From Jerusalem to Jericho": A study of Situational and Dispositional Variables in Helping Behavior". JPSP, 1973, 27, 100-108. For an enlightening discussion of this case from the perspective of research ethics, see http://courseware.monash.edu.au/pep/core/study_guide/Core%20Part%201.pdf

[3] After pencillin had become widely available and used to treat syphilis, the Public Health Service convened an Ad Hoc Committee "to examine data from the Tuskegee Study and offer advice on continuance of this study. Participants of the February 6, 1969 meeting included: . . . Dr. Sidney Olansky, Professor of Medicine, Emory University Clinic." www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/radiation/dir/mstreet/commeet/meet1/brief1/br1i.txt Accessed 3/7/06. According to Stephen Thomas, Olansky defended the syphilis trials as late as 1979. www.kaisernetwork.org/health_cast/uploaded_files/Tanscript_Thomas.pdf. Accessed 3/7/06.

[4] The following six paragraphs are based on work of Gary Varner, "Utilitarianism," http://philosophy.tamu.edu/~gary/bioethics/ethicaltheory/index2.html. Varner created Table 2, and it is used here with his permission. http://philosophy.tamu.edu/~gary/bioethics/ethicaltheory/utilitarianism.example2.html. Accessed 3/7/06.

[5] "Medical Experiments of the Holocaust and Nazi Medicine," www.remember.org/educate/medexp.html. Accessed 3/7/06.