

CONTEMPORARY MORAL PROBLEMS

By Jinno Rafael A. Malabanan



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 Philippines License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/philippines/).

This book is dedicated to you.

It is all about facts about life.

It is all about being awakened about what
should be done and what should not be done

CONTENTS

- Chapter 1 – James Rachels : Egoism and Scepticism 3
- Chapter 2 – John Arthur : Religion, Morality and Conscience 7
- Chapter 3 – Friedrich Nietzsche : Master- and Slave-Morality 10
- Chapter 4 – Mary Midgley : Trying Out One’s New Sword 13
- Chapter 5 – John Stuart Mill : Utilitarianism 16
- Chapter 6 – James Rachels : The Debate Over Utilitarianism 20
- Chapter 7 – Immanuel Kant : The Categorical Imperative 23
- Chapter 8 – Aristotle : Happiness and Virtue 26
- Chapter 9 – Joel Feinberg : The Nature and Value of Rights 29
- Chapter 10 – Ronald Dworkin : Taking Rights Seriously 32
- Chapter 11 – John Rawls : A Theory of Justice 35
- Chapter 12 – Annette Baier : The Need for More Than Justice 38

Chapter: 1- James Rachels: Egoism and Moral Skepticism

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Author: James E. White

Amazon: http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1

Quote: "The majority of mankind is grossly deceived about what is, or ought to be, the case, where morals are concerned."

What I expect to learn:

The learning expectation for this chapter review would be I would learn more about egoism. What is it all about and why is it important.

Chapter Review:

For me, this chapter is all about teaching what selfishness and what unselfishness is. In this chapter, it discusses The Legend of Gyges is all about a shepherd who found a ring in a fissure cause by an earthquake, which the ring can make the wearer invisible and enable him to go anywhere and do anything undetected. Gyges use the power of the ring to gain entry to the Royal Palace where he seduced the Queen and murdered the King and subsequently seized the throne. In this case, it simply describes men are selfish because of their self-interests and selfishness is an egoism. Egoism has two views, the psychological egoism and ethical egoism. Psychological Egoism is the view that all men are selfish in everything that they do, that is, that the only motive from which anyone ever acts is self-interest. Ethical Egoism is, by contrast, a normative view about how men ought to act. It is the view that, regardless of how men do in fact behave, they have no obligation to do anything except what it is in their own interests.

This chapter explains that it is up to the person whether he would do something just for his self-interest or for the benefit of the majority or the many.

What I've learned:

What have I learned is that why people are sometimes selfish and what forces people such selfishness.

Integrative Questions:

1. What is egoism?
2. What is psychological egoism?
3. What is ethical egoism?
4. Who are the egoists?
5. What is ethical altruism?

Review Questions:

1. Explain the legend of Gyges. What questions about morality are raised by the story?

The Legend of Gyges is all about a shepherd who found a ring in a fissure cause by an earthquake, which the ring can make the wearer invisible and enable him to go anywhere and do anything undetected. Gyges use the power of the ring to gain entry to the Royal Palace where he seduced the Queen and murdered the King and subsequently seized the throne.

The questions about morality that are raised in the story are: How will the so-called virtuous man behave? Why shouldn't a man simply do what he pleases or what he thinks is best for himself? What reason is there for him to continue being "moral" when it is clearly not to his own advantage to do so?

2. Distinguish between psychological and ethical egoism.

Psychological Egoism is the view that all men are selfish in everything that they do, that is, that the only motive from which anyone ever acts is self-interest.

Ethical Egoism is, by contrast, a normative view about how men ought to act. It is the view that, regardless of how men do in fact behave, they have no obligation to do anything except what it is in their own interests.

3. Rachels discusses two arguments for psychological egoism. What are these arguments and how does he reply to them?

The two arguments for psychological egoism are: The first argument is, if we describe one person's action as selfish, and another person's actions as unselfish, we are overlooking the crucial fact that in both cases, assuming that the action is done voluntarily, the agent is merely doing what he most wants to do. Rachels reaction to this is that the argument is so bad that it would not deserve to be taken seriously except for the fact that so many otherwise intelligent people have been taken in by it.

The second argument is, since so-called unselfish actions always produce a sense of self-satisfaction in the agent and since this sense of satisfaction is a pleasant state of consciousness, it follows that the point of action is really to achieve a pleasant state of consciousness, rather than to bring about any good for others. Therefore, the action is "unselfish" only at a superficial level of analysis. Rachels reaction to this is that this argument suffers from defects similar to the previous one. Why should we think that merely because someone derives satisfaction from helping others this makes him selfish? Isn't the unselfish man precisely the one who does derive satisfaction from helping others, while the selfish man does not?

4. What three commonplace confusions does Rachels detect in the thesis of psychological egoism?

The three commonplace confusions that Rachels detects in the thesis of psychological egoism are: The confusion of selfishness with self-interest, The assumption that every action is done either from self-interest or from other-regarding motives, The common but false assumption that a concern for one's own welfare is incompatible with any genuine concern for the welfare of others.

5. State the arguments for saying that ethical egoism is inconsistent. Why doesn't Rachels accept the argument?

The arguments for saying that ethical egoism is inconsistent are: To say that any action or policy of action is right entails that it is right for anyone in the

same sort of circumstances. I cannot, for example, say that it is right for me to lie to you, and yet object when you lie to me. I cannot hold that it is all right for me to drink your beer and then complain when you drink mine.

Rachels doesn't accept the argument for the reason that he thinks that would be unwarranted; for he thinks that we can show, contrary to this argument, how ethical egoism can be maintained consistently.

6. According to Rachels, why shouldn't we hurt others, and why should we help others?

According to Rachels, we shouldn't hurt others for the reason that other people would be hurt and we should help others for the reason that other people would be benefited.

7. How can the egoist reply?

The egoist, no doubt, will not be happy with this.

Discussion Questions:

1. Has Rachels answered the question raised by Glaucon, namely, "Why be moral?" If so, what exactly is his answer?

Yes, because he explains why shouldn't we hurt others and why should we help others.

2. Are genuine egoists rare, as Rachels claims? Is it a fact that most people care about others, even people they don't know?

Genuine egoists are not rare according to Rachels because he explains that most of the people are doing anything to help others and not just for self-interest and it is a fact.

3. Suppose we define ethical altruism as the view the one should always act for the benefit of others and never in one's own self-interest. Is such a view immoral or not?

For me, it is not immoral, if you believe that what you are doing are for others then do it. Don't think of your self-interest, think of how others can benefit.

Chapter: 2- John Arthur: Religion, Morality and Conscience

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Author: James E. White

Amazon: [http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-](http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1)

[White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1)

Quote: "Morality is Social."

What I expect to learn:

I'm expecting to learn the difference and the connection between religion and morality.

Chapter Review:

For me, this chapter is all about knowing the relationship between religion and morality. Are the two different with each other or whether the two has some connections with each other?

According to Arthur, morality and religion is different for the reason that morality involves our attitudes toward various forms of behavior, typically expressed using the notions of rules, rights and obligations. On the other hand, religion, typically involves prayer, worship, beliefs about the supernatural, institutional forms and authoritative texts.

Morality and Religion are connected for the reason that without religious motivation people could not be expected to do the right thing; that religion is necessary to provide

guidance to people in their search for the correct course of action; and that religion is essential for there even to be a right or wrong.

What I've learned:

I've learned that religion could truly affect morality. That religion can change immorality.

Integrative Questions:

1. How are morality and religion different?
2. What is moral motivation?
3. What is moral knowledge?
4. Who are the divine command theory?
5. How are morality and religion connected?

Review Questions:

1. According to Arthur, how are morality and religion different?

According to Arthur, morality and religion is different for the reason that morality involves our attitudes toward various forms of behavior, typically expressed using the notions of rules, rights and obligations. On the other hand, religion, typically involves prayer, worship, beliefs about the supernatural, institutional forms and authoritative texts.

2. Why isn't religion necessary for moral motivation?

Religion isn't necessary for moral motivation because most of us, in fact, just worry about getting caught, being blamed and being looked down on by others. We also may do what is right just because it's right, or because we don't want to hurt others or embarrass family and friends.

3. Why isn't religion necessary as a source of moral knowledge?

Religion isn't necessary for moral knowledge for the reason that consider how much we would need to know about religion and revelation in order for religion to provide moral guidance. Besides being aware that there is a God, we'd also have to think about which of the many religions is true.

4. What is the divine command theory? Why does Arthur reject this theory?

The Divine Command Theory means that God has the same sort of relation to moral law as the legislature has to statutes it enacts: without God's commands there would be no moral rules, just as without a legislature there would be no statutes.

Arthur rejects this theory because of what the divine theory implies. Suppose we were to grant that the divine command theory is correct, so that actions are right just because they are commanded by God. The same, of course, can be said about those deeds that we believe are wrong. If God hadn't commanded us not to do them, they would not be wrong.

5. According to Arthur, how are morality and religion connected?

Morality and Religion are connected for the reason that without religious motivation people could not be expected to do the right thing; that religion is necessary to provide guidance to people in their search for the correct course of action; and that religion is essential for there even to be a right or wrong.

6. Dewey says that morality is social. What does this mean, according to Arthur?

According to Arthur, this means that if Dewey is correct, then it seems clear there is an important sense in which morality not only can be taught but must be. Besides early moral training, moral thinking depends on our ability to imagine others' reactions and to imaginatively put ourselves into their shoes.

Discussion Questions:

1. Has Arthur refuted the divine command theory? If not, how can it be defended?
2. If morality is social, as Dewey says, then how can we have any obligations to nonhuman animals?
3. What does Dewey mean by moral education? Does a college ethics class count as moral education?

Chapter: 3- Friedrich Nietzsche: Master- and Slave-Morality

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Author: James E. White

Amazon: [http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James](http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1)

White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1

Quote: "A healthy society allows superior individuals to exercise their will to power, their drive toward domination and exploitation of the inferior."

What I expect to learn:

The learning expectation for this chapter review would be what is master-morality and slave-morality.

Chapter Review:

For me, this chapter is all about teaching and describing what is a good and healthy society is. A good and healthy society in describing that a healthy society allows superior individuals to exercise their "will to power", their drive toward domination and exploitation of the inferior.

In this chapter, I also learned what is master-morality and slave-morality. Master Morality emphasizes power, strength, egoism and freedom, while Slave-Morality calls for weakness, submission, sympathy and love.

What I've learned:

What have I learned is that power has always come on top. The weak are the ones who became slaves and the powerful became the masters.

Integrative Questions:

1. What is will to power?
2. What is master-morality?
3. What is slave-morality?
4. Who experience master-morality and slave morality?
5. What is creator of values?

Review Questions:

1. How does Nietzsche characterize a good and healthy society?

Nietzsche characterizes a good and healthy society in describing that a healthy society allows superior individuals to exercise their "will to power", their drive toward domination and exploitation of the inferior.

2. What is Nietzsche's view of injury, violence, and exploitation?

Nietzsche's view of injury, violence, and exploitation is that every individual has actual similarity of the amount of force and degree of worth and their co-relation within one organization.

3. Distinguish between master-morality and slave-morality.

Master Morality emphasizes power, strength, egoism and freedom, while Slave-Morality calls for weakness, submission, sympathy and love.

4. Explain the Will to Power.

Will to Power means to gain ground, acquire ascendancy- not owing to any morality of immorality and to grow.

Discussion Questions:

1. Some people view Nietzsche's writings as harmful and even dangerous. For example, some have charged Nietzsche with inspiring Nazism. Are these charges justified or not? Why or why not?

These charges are justified because, as I read this case, it is all about power or being superior just like what master-morality means and Nazism is about power. It is all about master and slave.

2. What does it mean to be "a creator of value"?

A creator of value is someone who wants to do anything that he/she doesn't need any approval, someone that determines values.

Chapter: 4- Mary Midgley: Trying Out One's New Sword

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Author: James E. White

Amazon: [http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James](http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1)

White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1

Quote: "Most cultures are formed out of many influences."

What I expect to learn:

The learning expectation for this chapter review would be what is moral isolationism?
Do separated and unmixed cultures is unreal?

Chapter Review:

For me, this chapter is all about studying cultures, what is moral isolationism. Well, Moral Isolationism is the view of anthropologists and other that we cannot criticize cultures that we do not understand. According to Midgley, moral isolationism would lay down a general ban on moral reasoning. Essentially, this is the programme of immoralism and it carries a distressing logical difficulty.

This chapter also talks about what could be the basis in criticizing other cultures. Midgley thinks that the culture of our own is the basis of criticizing other cultures. This means that why do we judge other cultures if we could judge our own culture.

What I've learned:

What have I learned is that cultures are truly mixed and the thought that cultures are separated and unmixed is truly unreal.

Integrative Questions:

1. What is moral isolationism?
2. What Tsujigiri means?
3. What is crossroads-cut?
4. What is the basis in criticizing other cultures?
5. Are cultures separated and unmixed?

Review Questions:

1. What is "moral isolationism"?

Moral Isolationism is the view of anthropologists and other that we cannot criticize cultures that we do not understand.

2. Explain the Japanese custom of tsujigiri. What questions does Midgley ask about this custom?

Tsujigiri literally means as crossroads-cut. Tsujigiri is a verb on classical Japanese which means "to try out ones new sword on a chance wayfarer". A Samurai sword had to be tried out because, if it was to work properly, it had to slice through someone at a single blow, from the shoulder to the opposite flank. Otherwise, the warrior bungled his stroke. This could injure his honour, offend

his ancestors, and even let down his emperor. So tests were needed, and wayfarers had to be expended. Any wayfarers would do – provided, of course, that he was not another Samurai. Scientist recognizes a familiar problem about the rights of experimental subjects.

3. What is wrong with moral isolationism, according to Midgley?

According to Midgley, moral isolationism would lay down a general ban on moral reasoning. Essentially, this is the programme of immoralism and it carries a distressing logical difficulty.

4. What does Midgley think is the basis for criticizing other cultures?

Midgley thinks that the culture of our own is the basis of criticizing other cultures. This means that why do we judge other cultures if we could judge our own culture.

Discussion Questions:

1. Midgley says that Nietzsche is an immoralist. Is that an accurate and fair assessment of Nietzsche? Why or why not?

I don't know because Nietzsche also describes something that is not immoral. He just describes what he thinks about a good and healthy society.

2. Do you agree with Midgley's claim that the idea of separate and unmixed cultures is unreal? Explain your answer.

I agree because it is really obvious in our life today. Many cultures are mixed. Many people travel from their country to other countries. In that way, it describes that there is already a mixed culture.

Chapter: 5- John Stuart Mill: Utilitarianism

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Author: James E. White

Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James>

White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1

Quote: "By happiness are intended pleasures and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and privation of pleasures."

What I expect to learn:

The learning expectation for this chapter review would be whose happiness should be considered? What is the higher and lower pleasure?

Chapter Review:

For me, this chapter is all about studying happiness and pleasure. This describes whether whom should be happy, oneself or the majority.

This chapter also describes the meaning of the principle of utility. The Principle of Utility or the greatest happiness principle state that the actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness are intended pleasures and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and privation of pleasures. It also describes the what are higher and lower pleasure and its difference. The higher pleasure is the one that all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feelings of moral obligation to prefer it. While the lower pleasure is when those who are competently acquainted with both, place so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasures which their nature is capable of.

This chapter also describes whose happiness should be considered. For me, in what I understand about the case, those who are in greater in number or the majority should be considered in happiness.

What I've learned:

What have I learned is that true happiness is cannot be seen by the happiness of one person but in the happiness of the majority.

Integrative Questions:

1. What is principle of utility?
2. What is a doctrine worthy only of swine?
3. Give examples of higher pleasures.
4. Give examples of lower pleasures.
5. Whose happiness should be considered?

Review Questions:

1. State and explain the Principle of Utility. Show how it could be used to justify actions that are conventionally viewed as wrong, such as lying and stealing.

The Principle of Utility or the greatest happiness principle state that the actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness are intended pleasures and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and privation of pleasures.

The Principle of Utility could be used to justify actions that are conventionally viewed as wrong by for example lying could be a cause for a person to be unhappy. His conscience could kill him. He would always be thinking about his lies.

2. How does Mill reply to the objection that Epicureanism is a doctrine worthy only of swine?

Mill said that the objection that Epicureanism is a doctrine worthy only of swine is disregarding precisely because the beast's pleasure does not satisfy human beings conceptions of happiness.

3. How does Mill distinguish between higher and lower pleasures?

The higher pleasure is the one that all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feelings of moral obligation to prefer it. While the lower pleasure is when those who are competently acquainted with both, place so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasures which their nature is capable of.

4. According to Mill, whose happiness must be considered?

For me, in what I understand about the case, those who are in greater in number or the majority should be considered in happiness.

5. Carefully reconstruct Mill's proof of the Principle of Utility.

According to the utilitarian conception, there was no original desire of it, or motive to it, save its conduciveness to pleasure, and especially to protection from pain. But through the association thus formed, it may be felt a good in itself, and desired as such with a great intensity as any other good; and with this difference between it and the love of money, of power, or of fame, that all of these may, and often do, render the individual noxious to the other members of

the society to which he belongs, whereas there is nothing which makes him so much a blessing to them as the cultivation of the disinterested love of virtue.

Discussion Questions:

1. Is happiness nothing more than pleasure, and the absence of pain? What do you think?

I disagree because happiness is different from pleasure. Happiness can stand alone even without pleasure. You can smile even without pleasure.

2. Does Mill convince you that the so-called higher pleasures are better than the lower ones?

Yes because in higher pleasures, you should be ready for anything or you should be superior in anything.

3. Mill says, "In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility." Is this true or not?

I agree because you should do something for the majority and not for yourself alone. Make a move that ensures that the majority will be happy as you are.

4. Many commentators have thought that Mill's proof of the Principle of Utility is defective. Do you agree? If so, then what mistake or mistakes does he make? Is there any way to reformulate the proof so that it is not defective?

Chapter:6 - James Rachels: The Debate over Utilitarianism

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Author: James E. White

Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James>

White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1

Quote: "Right actions are those that have the best consequences."

What I expect to learn:

The learning expectation for this chapter review would be are those nonhuman beings considered to be given moral consideration?

Chapter Review:

For me, this chapter is all about studying happiness and its consequences. This chapter also describes what the problem with hedonism. According to Rachels, the problem about Hedonism is it gets things the wrong way around. Hedonism misunderstands the nature of happiness. Happiness is not something that is recognized as good and sought for its own sake, with other things appreciated only as means of bringing it about.

It also distinguishes what is rule-utilitarianism and act-utilitarianism. Rule-utilitarianism, the new version of the theory which rules are established by reference to the principle and individual's acts will then be judged right and wrong by reference to the rules. Act-Utilitarianism is the original theory.

What I've learned:

What I have learned is that not all happiness is truly happiness till the end. Some greatest happiness has more consequences than happiness.

Integrative Questions:

1. What is the utilitarian doctrine?
2. What is hedonism?
3. What is rule-utilitarianism?
4. What is act-utilitarian?
5. Who are the utilitarians?

Review Questions:

1. Rachels says that classical utilitarianism can be summed up in three propositions. What are they?

Classical Utilitarianism is classified as:

- a. First, Actions are to be judged right or wrong solely in the virtue of their consequences.
 - b. Second, in assessing consequences, the only thing that matters is the amount of happiness or unhappiness that is caused.
 - c. Third, in calculating happiness or unhappiness that will be caused, no one's happiness is to be counted as more important than anyone else's.
2. Explain the problem with hedonism. How do defenders of utilitarianism respond to this problem?

According to Rachels, the problem about Hedonism is it gets things the wrong way around. Hedonism misunderstands the nature of happiness. Happiness is not something that is recognized as good and sought for its own sake, with other things appreciated only as means of bringing it about.

Utilitarianism sought a way to formulate their view without assuming a hedonistic account of good and evil. G.E. Moore, an English philosopher, suggested that there are three obvious intrinsic goods; Pleasures, Friendships and aesthetic enjoyment - and that right actions are those that increase the world's supply of such things.

3. What are the objections about justice, rights, and promises?

The objection about justice is that in the case about justice, he should bear false witness against the innocent person.

The objection about rights is what about the morality of the officer's behaviors?

The objection about promises is why utilitarianism is vulnerable to this sort of criticism?

4. Distinguish between rule- and act- utilitarianism. How does rule-utilitarianism reply to the objections?

Rule-utilitarianism, the new version of the theory which rules are established by reference to the principle and individual's acts will then be judged right and wrong by reference to the rules. Act-Utilitarianism is the original theory.

5. What is the third line of defense?

The third line of defense is a small group of contemporary utilitarian's has had a very different response to the utilitarian arguments. That argument points out that the classical theory is at odds with ordinary notions of justice, individual rights, and so on; to this there response is essentially, "So what?".

Discussion Questions:

1. Smart's defense of utilitarianism is to reject common moral beliefs when they conflict with utilitarianism. Is this acceptable to you or not? Explain your answer.

For me, it is not acceptable because I would not reject my common moral beliefs just because there is a conflict with utilitarianism because it is what I know even before.

2. A utilitarian is supposed to give moral consideration to all concerned. Who must be considered? What about nonhuman animals? How about lakes and streams?

Utilitarian's focuses on human beings but because nonhuman beings also can cause unhappiness with humans, then they also consider nonhuman beings.

3. Rachels claims that merit should be given moral consideration independent of utility. Do you agree?

Chapter: 7- Immanuel Kant: The Categorical Imperative

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Author: James E. White

Amazon: [http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James](http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1)

White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1

Quote: “It is impossible to conceive anything at all in the world, or even out of it, which can be taken as good without qualification, except a good will.”

What I expect to learn:

The learning expectation for this chapter review would be all about self-love.

Chapter Review:

For me, this chapter is all about studying of what a person can do for self-love. In this chapter, Kant described that the good will is that it is impossible to conceive anything at all in the world, or even out of it, which can be taken as good without qualification, except a good will. A good will is not good because of what it effects or accomplishes – because of its fitness for attaining some proposed end: it is good through its willing alone – that is, good in itself. He also described what is hypothetical and categorical imperatives. According to Kant, when he conceives Hypothetical Imperatives in general, he does not know beforehand what it will contain – until its condition is given. But if he conceives Categorical Imperatives, he knows at once what it contains. He also explains that the categorical imperative can be used to justify immoral actions.

What I’ve learned:

What have I learned is that too much self-love could cause immorality.

Integrative Questions:

1. What is good will?
2. What are hypothetical imperatives?
3. What are categorical imperatives?
4. What do motives of duty that have no moral worth mean?
5. Is taking one's life immoral?

Review Questions:

1. Explain Kant's account of the good will.

Kant's account of the good will is that it is impossible to conceive anything at all in the world, or even out of it, which can be taken as good without qualification, except a good will. A good will is not good because of what it effects or accomplishes – because of its fitness for attaining some proposed end: it is good through its willing alone – that is, good in itself.

2. Distinguish between hypothetical and categorical imperatives.

According to Kant, when he conceives Hypothetical Imperatives in general, he does not know beforehand what it will contain – until its condition is given. But if he conceives Categorical Imperatives, he knows at once what it contains.

3. State the first formulation of the categorical imperative (using the notion of a universe law), and explain how Kant uses this rule to derive some specific duties toward self and others.

The only further question to ask is whether this principle of self-love can become a universal law of nature. It is then seen at once that a system of nature by whose law the very same feeling whose function is to stimulate the furtherance of life should actually destroy life would contradict itself and consequently could not subsist as a system of nature.

4. State the second version of the categorical imperative (using the language of means and ends). And explain it.

According to Kant, this principle of self-love or personal advantage is perhaps quite compatible with his own entire future welfare; only there remains the question "Is it right?"

Discussion Questions:

1. Are the two versions of the categorical imperative just different expressions of one basic rule, or are they two different rules? Defend your view.

The two versions of the categorical imperative are just different expressions of one basic rule because they are the same because both of them talk about self-love in the negative side.

2. Kant claims that an action that is not done from the motive of duty has no moral worth. Do you agree or not? If not, give some counterexamples.

No, because some undone duties can cause good for others.

3. Some commentators think that the categorical imperative (particularly the first formulation) can be used to justify immoral actions. Is this a good criticism?

Yes, because in taking your own life is obviously an example of an immoral action.

Chapter: 8- Aristotle: Happiness And Virtue

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Author: James E. White

Amazon: [http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James](http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1)

White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1

Quote: "All Human Beings Seek Happiness."

What I expect to learn:

The learning expectation for this chapter review would be all about the relationship of happiness and virtue.

Chapter Review:

For me, this chapter is all about studying of how a person defines happiness and virtue. For Aristotle, happiness is not pleasure, honor, or wealth, but an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue. Happiness is related to virtue by means that virtue is something that he/she likes to do like vices; it makes him/her happy. Lastly, happiness is related to pleasure because pleasure surely makes a person happy because it is something that a person always wants. Aristotle also explains that virtue is something that a product of training and habits, it is also the mean between the vices of excess and deficiency.

What I've learned:

What have I learned is that not all happiness is about pleasure, honor or wealth but also with vices of excess and deficiency.

Integrative Questions:

1. What is the happiness?
2. What is virtue?
3. What is moral virtue?
4. What is intellectual virtue?
5. What is the meaning of the vices of excess and deficiency?

Review Questions:

1. What is happiness, according to Aristotle? How is it related to virtue? How is it related pleasure?

Happiness according to Aristotle is that happiness is the best, noblest, and most pleasant thing in the world. For me, that means that happiness is doing anything that makes a person feel comfortable and contented. Happiness is related to virtue by means

that virtue is something that he/she likes to do like vices; it makes him/her happy. Lastly, happiness is related to pleasure because pleasure surely makes a person happy because it is something that a person always wants.

2. How does Aristotle explain moral virtue? Give some examples.

Moral Virtue according to Aristotle comes from training and habit and generally is a state of character that is a mean between vices of excess and deficiency. For example, Aristotle portrays the virtue of courage as a mean between the extremes of rashness (an excess) and cowardice (a deficiency).

3. Is it possible for everyone in our society to be happy, as Aristotle explains it? If not, who cannot be happy?

Yes, according to Aristotle all human beings seek happiness that's why everyone is possible to be happy.

Discussion Questions:

1. Aristotle characterizes a life of pleasure a suitable for beasts. But what, if anything, is wrong with a life of pleasure?

2. Aristotle claims that the philosopher will be happier than anyone else. Why is this? Do you agree or not?

Chapter: 9- Joel Feinberg: The Nature and Value of Rights

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Author: James E. White

Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James>

White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1

Quote: "We can make the human beings in it as attractive and virtuous as possible without taxing our conceptions of the limits of human nature."

What I expect to learn:

The learning expectation for this chapter review would be it would describe the meaning of human rights.

Chapter Review:

For me, this chapter is all about discussing the importance of human rights. Feinberg demonstrate the importance of human rights by imagining Nowheresville, a world like our own except that people do not have rights. As a result, people in this world cannot make moral claims when they are treated unjustly. They cannot demand or claim just treatment, and so they are deprived of self-respect and human dignity. Feinberg also explains the doctrine of the logical correlativity of rights and duties is the doctrine that all duties entail other people's rights and all rights entails other people's duties. Feinberg also explain that a personal desert is when a person is said to deserve something good from us what is meant in parts is that there would be certain propriety in our giving that good thing to him in virtue of kind of person he is, perhaps, or more likely, in virtue of some specific thing he has done.

What I've learned:

What have I learned is that it is really important that humans consider every ones human rights.

Integrative Questions:

1. What is Nowheresville?

2. Explain the doctrine of the logical correlativity of right and duties.
3. Explain the concept of personal desert.
4. Explain the notion of a sovereign right-monopoly.
5. What are claim-rights?

Review Questions:

1. Describe Nowheresville. How is this world different from our world?

Nowheresville, a world like our own except that people do not have rights. As a result, people in this world cannot make moral claims when they are treated unjustly. They cannot demand or claim just treatment, and so they are deprived of self-respect and human dignity.

2. Explain the doctrine of the logical correlativity of right and duties. What is Feinberg's position on this doctrine?

The doctrine of the logical correlativity of rights and duties is the doctrine that all duties entail other people's rights and all rights entails other people's duties.

3. How does Feinberg explain the concept of personal desert? How would personal desert work in Nowheresville?

According to Feinberg, Personal desert is when a person is said to deserve something good from us what is meant in parts is that there would be certain proprietary in our giving that good thing to him in virtue of kind of person he is, perhaps, or more likely, in virtue of some specific thing he has done.

4. Explain the notion of a sovereign right-monopoly. How would this work in Nowheresville according to Feinberg?

The notion of Sovereign right-monopoly is about the latter case that he could be said not merely to deserve the good thing but also have a right to it as his due; and of course we will not have that sort of things in Nowheresville. That weaker kind of proprietary which is mere dessert is simply kind of fittingness between ones party's character or action and another party's favorable response, much like that between humors, laughter, or good performance applause.

5. What are claim-rights? Why does Feinberg think they are morally important?

Claim rights are conceptual linkage between personal rights and claiming.

Discussion Questions:

1. Does Feinberg make a convincing case for the importance of rights? Why or why not?

Yes, because Feinberg explained the importance of rights through describing Nowheresville.

2. Can you give a noncircular definition of claiming-right?

Claiming Right is something that describes that right is connected with claim.

Chapter: 10- Ronald Dworkin: Taking Rights Seriously

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Author: James E. White

Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James>

White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1

Quote: "If a people have a right to do something, then it is wrong to interfere with them."

What I expect to learn:

The learning expectation for this chapter review would be it would describe the meaning of taking rights seriously.

Chapter Review:

For me, this chapter is all about discussing the meaning of taking rights seriously. Dworkin explained that right in the strong sense means that if a people have a right to do something, then it is wrong to interfere with them. For example, if citizen have a right to free speech, then it is wrong for the government to interfere with the exercise of this right. He also distinguishes between legal and moral right. Moral Rights are [rights](#) which are not contingent upon the laws, customs, or beliefs or a particular society or

[polity](#) in contrast. Legal rights are rights conveyed by a particular polity, codified into legal [statutes](#) by some form of [legislature](#), and as such are contingent upon local laws, customs, or beliefs. According to Dworkin the institution of right must require an act of faith on the part of the minorities and the second was the Government will not reestablished respect of law without giving the law some claim to respect.

What I've learned:

What have I learned is that it is really important that people should respect every people's human rights.

Integrative Questions:

1. What is right in the strong sense?
2. What is legal right?
3. What is moral right?
4. What are the two models of how a government might define the rights of its citizens?
5. The institution of right must require what?

Review Questions:

1. What does Dworkin mean by right in the strong sense? What rights in this sense are protected by the U.S. Constitution?

According to Dworkin, right in the strong sense means that if a people have a right to do something, then it is wrong to interfere with them. For example, if citizen have a right to free speech, then it is wrong for the government to interfere with the exercise of this right.

2. Distinguish between legal and moral right. Give some example of legal rights that are not moral right, and moral right that are not legal rights.

Moral Rights are [rights](#) which are not contingent upon the laws, customs, or beliefs or a particular society or [polity](#) in contrast Legal rights are rights conveyed by a particular polity, codified into legal [statutes](#) by some form of [legislature](#), and as such are contingent upon local laws, customs, or beliefs.

3. What are the two models of how a government might define the rights of its citizens? Which does Dworkin find more attractive?

4. According to Dworkin, what two important ideas are behind the institution or rights?

According to Dworkin the institution of right must require an act of faith on the part of the minorities and the second was the Government will not reestablished respect of law without giving the law some claim to respect.

Discussion Questions:

1. Does a person have a right to break the law? Why or why not?

For me, yes, because if they break the law for they believe that what they will do is right, then it's valid as long as they can prove their right.

2. Are rights in the strong sense compatible with Mill's utilitarianism?

Yes, because Mill's utilitarianism is all about promoting happiness and rights are promoted to attain freedom, when there is freedom, people feel happy.

3. Do you think that Kant would accept right in the strong sense or not?

Chapter: 11- John Rawls: A Theory of Justice

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Author: James E. White

Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James>

White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1

Quote: "Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others."

What I expect to learn:

The learning expectation for this chapter review would be discussion about equal rights.

Chapter Review:

For me, this chapter is all about discussing the justice and equal rights. Rawls's theory states that there are two principles of justice: The first principle involves equal basic liberties, and the second principle concerns the arrangement of social and economic inequalities. According to Rawls theory, these are the principles that free and rational persons would accept in a hypothetical original position where there is a veil of ignorance hiding from the contractors all the particular facts about themselves.

The first principle of justice states that each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others. The second principle of justice states that social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage and attached to positions and offices open to all.

What I've learned:

What have I learned is that it is really important that people should have equal rights in every aspect of life.

Integrative Questions:

1. What is Rawls's theory?
2. What are the two principles of justice?
3. State Rawls's first principle of justice.

4. State Rawls's second principle of justice.
5. What is the main idea of the theory of justice?

Review Questions:

1. Carefully explain Rawls's conception of the original position.

Rawls's theory states that there are two principles of justice: The first principle involves equal basic liberties, and the second principle concerns the arrangement of social and economic inequalities. According to Rawls theory, these are the principles that free and rational persons would accept in a hypothetical original position where there is a veil of ignorance hiding from the contractors all the particular facts about themselves.

2. State and explain Rawls's first principle of justice.

The first principle of justice states that each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others.

3. State and explain the second principle. Which principle has priority such that it cannot be sacrificed?

The second principle of justice states that social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage and attached to positions and offices open to all.

Discussion Questions:

1. On the first principle, each person has an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty as long as this does not interfere with a similar liberty for others. What does this allow people to do? Does it mean, for example, that people have right to engage in homosexual activities as long as they don't interfere with

others? Can people produce and view pornography if it does not restrict anyone's freedom? Are people allowed to take drugs in the privacy of their homes?

This allows people to do anything that won't affect others. This means that everyone can do anything as long as it is legal and nothing to do other people's feelings.

2. Is it possible for free and rational persons in the original position to agree upon different principles than give by Rawls? For example, why wouldn't they agree to an equal distribution of wealth and income rather than an unequal distribution? That is, why wouldn't they adopt socialism rather than capitalism? Isn't socialism just as rational as capitalism?

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Author: James E. White

Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James>

White/dp/0495553204/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1234122156&sr=1-1

Quote: "The best moral theory is one that harmonizes justice and care."

What I expect to learn:

The learning expectation for this chapter review would be discussion about justice and care.

Chapter Review:

For me, this chapter is all about discussing justice and care. Baier distinguishes between the justice perspective of philosophers such as Kant and Rawls and the care perspective Gilligan found in her studies of the moral development of women. Baier argues that the justice perspective by itself is inadequate as a moral theory. It overlooks inequalities between people, it has an unrealistic view of freedom of choice, and it ignores the importance of moral emotions such as love. The best moral theory, she claims, is one that harmonizes justice and care.

The theory of moral development has two dimensions the first is to aim at achieving satisfying community with others, the other aiming at autonomy or equality of power. The relative predominance of one over the other development will depend both upon the relative salience of the two evils in early childhood, and on early and later reinforcement or discouragement in attempts made to guard against these two evils. Baier said that these provides the germs of a theory about why, given current customs of childrearing, it should be mainly woman who are not content with only the moral outlook that she calls the justice perspectives, necessary though that was and is seem by them so have been to their hard worn liberation from sexist oppression. They, like the blacks, used the language of rights and justice to change their own social position, but nevertheless see limitations in that language, according to Gilligan's findings as a moral

psychologist. She reports the “discontent: with the individualist more or less Kantian moral frame works that dominates Western moral theory and which influenced moral psychologist such as Lawrence Kohlberg, to whose conception of moral maturity she seeks an alternatives. The target of Gilligan’s criticism is the dominant Kantian traditions.

The three important differences between Kantian liberals and critics Baier says are, first it was dubious record, second was its inattention to relations inequality or its pretence of equality. The third reason is its exaggeration of scoop of choice, or its inattention to unchosen relations.

What I’ve learned:

What have I learned is that real morality is when there is justice and care.

Integrative Questions:

1. What is justice perspective?
2. What is care perspective?
3. What is the best moral theory according to Baier?
4. What is Kohlberg’s theory of moral development?
5. What are the three important differences between Kantian liberals and their critics?

Review Questions:

1. Distinguish between the justice and care perspectives. According to Gilligan, how do these perspectives develop?

Baier distinguishes between the justice perspective of philosophers such as Kant and Rawls and the care perspective Gilligan found in her studies of the moral development of women. Baier argues that the justice perspective by itself is inadequate as a moral theory. It overlooks inequalities between people, it has an unrealistic view of freedom of choice, and it ignores the importance of moral emotions such as love. The best moral theory, she claims, is one that harmonizes justice and care.

2. Explain Kohlberg's theory of moral development. What criticisms do Gilligan and Baier make of this theory?

The theory of moral development has two dimensions the first is to aim at achieving satisfying community with others, the other aiming at autonomy or equality of power. The relative predominance of one over the other development will depend both upon the relative salience of the two evils in early childhood, and on early and later reinforcement or discouragement in attempts made to guard against these two evils. Baier said that these provides the germs of a theory about why, given current customs of childrearing, it should be mainly women who are not content with only the moral outlook that she calls the justice perspectives, necessary though that was and is seem by them so have been to their hard worn liberation from sexist oppression. They, like the blacks, used the language of rights and justice to change their own social position, but nevertheless see limitations in that language, according to Gilligan's findings as a moral psychologist. She reports the "discontent: with the individualist more or less Kantian moral frame works that dominates Western moral theory and which influenced moral psychologist such as Lawrence Kohlberg, to whose conception of moral maturity she seeks an alternatives. The target of Gilligan's criticism is the dominant Kantian traditions.

3. Baier says there are three important differences between Kantian liberals and their critics. What are these differences?

The three important differences between Kantian liberals and critics Baier says are, first it was dubious record, second was its inattention to relations inequality or its pretence of equality. The third reason is its exaggeration of scope of choice, or its inattention to unchosen relations.

4. Why does Baier attack the Kantian view that the reason should control unruly passions?

Baier attacked the Kantian view because the Kantian picture of a controlling reason dictating to possibly unruly passions also tends to seem less useful when we are led to consider what sort of person we need to fill the role of parent, or indeed want in any close relationship. It might be important to fathers figure to have rational control over their violent urges to beat to death the children whose screams enrage them, but more than control of such nasty passions seems needed in the mother or primary parent, or parent-substitute by most psychological theories. They need to love their children's not just to control their irritation so the emphasis in Kantian theories on rational control of emotions. Rather than on cultivating desirable forms of emotions, in challenged by Gilligan, along with the challenge to the assumption of the centrality of autonomy, or relations between equals, and of freely chosen relations.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does Baier mean when she speaks of the need "to transvalue the values of our patriarchal past"? Do new values replace the old ones? If so, then do we abandon the old values of justice, freedom, and right?
2. What is wrong with the Kantian view that extends equal rights to all rational beings, including women and minorities? What would Baier say? What do you think?
3. Baier seems to reject the Kantian emphasis on freedom of choice. Granted, we do not choose our parent, but still don't we have freedom of choice about many things, and isn't this very important?