

Ethics

Questions / *Parallels* / **Main Ideas**

Notes

Overview of Ethical Knowledge

Note: Be wary of writing an essay on ethics rather than the knowledge of ethics

- *E.g. How do I know that this is right > Why is this right?*
- *Focus on Nature (JTB), Construction, Validity and Society*

Scope of Epistemology in Ethics

1. Nature
 - a. What does Right/Wrong Mean?
 - b. Is Right/Wrong Objective/Subjective?
 - c. Is Right/Wrong Internalist/Externalist
 - d. What actions/motives/people are Right and Wrong?
2. Construction & Validity
 - a. Why is something Right/Wrong?
3. Society
 - a. What are the implications of something being right/wrong?

Nature of Ethical Knowledge

Ethics exists on a spectrum

- Right vs Wrong
- Obligatory vs Forbidden
- Permissible vs Right/Wrong

Subjects of Other Fields of Knowledge

- *Science: Real-World Objects*
- *Maths: Relations between abstract idealised objects*
- *Art: Experiences*

Scale of Ethics



- Sometimes right/wrong are not direct opposites
 - E.g. It is right to help the less fortunate →/ It is wrong not to help the less fortunate
 - E.g. It is good not to eat meat →/ It is wrong not to eat meat
 - Right →/ Obligatory

Common Binaries

- Forbidden vs Permissible: Eating Meat
- Forbidden vs Obligatory: Telling the Truth
- Permissible vs Obligatory: Recycling

	<p><u>Subject of Ethical Knowledge Claims</u></p> <p>The “thing” of Ethical JTBs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions • People • Intentions/Motives
A fundamental belief in Ethics is...	
<p>Ought → Can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat of Determinism to Moral Realism 	<p><u>Ought implies Can</u></p> <p>If X ought to do something, it is understood that X can do it</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is possible for X to choose 2. X is free to choose either way 3. X is responsible for making the choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can't rejects Ought: If x can't do action y, we cannot say that x ought to do action y • Ought: Good/Obligatory • Used for evaluating if ethical knowledge is Real and Objective <p><u>Determinism</u></p> <p>The theory that all events, including moral choices, are completely determined by previously existing causes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genetic • Psychological • Theological • Causal
The OUGHT → CAN can be contextualised to...	
State the 3 Views on Human Nature	<p><u>Human Nature</u></p> <p>The kinds of powers, capacities and dispositions humans have as a result of their normal untouched starting condition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines what “can”s we have and the likeliness of certain actions <p>Views on Human Nature → Ethics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ethics is anti-real: A game with arbitrary rules <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. There is no such thing as good/evil b. Humans do not have a nature that tends towards good/evil c. BUT: Leads to the unpleasant conclusion that ethics is a meaningless tendency <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. If we assign any purpose to the game e.g. something pragmatic to maintain order in society we would be making an ethical judgement that that purpose e.g. order is good

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Perhaps we could assign purposes that are not ethically good but rationally good? E.g. Kant in his Critique of Practical Reason bases his ethical system off rational postulates (inescapable assumptions) one has to make in the pursuit of good</i> 2. Human Nature tends towards the good <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Do different people have this disposition to different extents? b. BUT: Why should we reward people for doing right? 3. Human Nature tends towards evil <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. BUT: How then can we judge a person for doing wrong? <p><i>Isn't there the option that ethics is something real and objective, yet humans do not have a tendency towards either?</i></p>
<p>When it comes to whether Ethics has a truth-value we must consider whether it is DESCRIPTIVE or PRESCRIPTIVE</p>	
<p>State the difference between prescriptivism and descriptivism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real vs Non-Real 	<p><u>Descriptive</u> Ethical Knowledge is for explaining moral conduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing Contexts of Moral Issues: Behaviors and Practices • Identifying Motives • Development of Theories about why people act as such • “It is wrong to kill” → “People of this culture have thought that it is wrong to kill” • Moral Explanation: Ethics explains behavior rather than evaluating how we should behave • Objectivist <p><u>Prescriptive</u> Ethically Knowledge is for morally evaluating human conduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Moral Guidance • “It is wrong to kill” → You should not kill • Moral Justification and Obligation: Ethics justifies/opposes behavior
<p>Define Objectivism and Subjectivism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth-Value <p>State two arguments for objectivism and subjectivism</p> <p>Define Cognitivism and Non-Cognitivism</p> <p>Define Cognitivism and</p>	<p><u>Objectivism</u> Ethical Claims have Truth-Value (Objectivism)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical statements describing behavior are either true or false • Objective: Not based on particular people’s/group’s judgements, beliefs and desires <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BUT: Does not imply moral universalism where certain actions are universally wrong regardless of circumstance • Independent of the mind <p>Argument from Epistemic Duties</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Epistemic Duties are prescribed in philosophical discussion

Non-cognitivism

- Role of reasoning

Explain the Frege-Gege Problem with Non-Cognitivism

Define Naturalism and Non-naturalism

- Explain the problem with Naturalism

- a. Though one may argue that this implies that EDs are pragmatic rather than objectively binding → Objectivity of Pragmatism is still assumed

2. Epistemic Duties **imply objective moral duties**

- a. Intellectual Honesty → Moral Honesty

3. Objective moral duties exist

Argument from **Pragmatism** about Moral Disagreement

1. People inevitably face **competing needs** about which we have to strike a compromise

- a. Institution of Property: Distinction between 'mine' and
- b. Truth-telling
- c. Promise-giving
- d. Restraint of Violence and Killing
- e. Restraint of sexual expression
- f. Attitude to strangers, minorities and the weak
- g. Distribution of Resources

2. Without objective moral truth → **No room for ethical discussion** as all standards are equally correct as taste and preferences

- a. No means of **weighing** competing justifications

3. Objective Moral Truths are **pragmatically necessary** for such moral discourse

- a. Cultural Relativism is still threatened by individual interpretations of culture

Subjectivism

Ethical Claims have no Truth-Value or truth-values vary

- Do > Believe
- No universal moral truths

Logical Positivism

- Ethical knowledge cannot be empirically observed, tested or proven

Wittgenstein: Language is a tool for communication defined by use

- Words do not correspond to some reality or Platonic Ideal but exist in a Family resemblance
 - Most parsimonious definition of language
- Therefore language can only express objective concepts in the real-world
- Cannot express concepts that are not observable
- Therefore: Language cannot convey ethical truths
 - Only in each person's subjective internal experience

Argument from contingency

- Morality manifests in human actions
- Humans are contingent beings (not necessary for humans to exist)
- ∴ Morality is subjectivist given that it depends on humans which are contingent
- BUT: Morality manifests in human actions →/ Morality is dependent on humans
 - May still be grounded in objective moral facts

Cognitivism

Ethics involves **reasoning** to form JTBs

Non-Cognitivism

Ethics (particularly ethical language) is concerned with **responses, actions and emotions** rather than thinking and consideration

- No JTBs and Truth-value (They lack truth-apt status)
- E.g. Emotivism
- Focus on what act the speaker is performing > What the speaker means in using moral language

Frege-Geach Problem

- Challenge to Non-cognitivism
1. Moral Language has logical properties:
 - a. Stealing is bad is contradictory with stealing is not bad
 - b. (Stealing is Bad → Murder is Bad) + (Stealing is Bad) → (Murder is Bad)
 2. Without True/False value if-then statements cannot make sense
 - a. (Stealing is Bad) is now I am expressing that stealing is bad
 - b. The conclusion cannot follow
 3. Non-cognitivist theories of moral language are wrong

A non-cognitivist view that moral terms have a non-cognitivist meaning makes sense for simple contexts:

Cheating is Wrong → I disapprove of cheating

However, it does not make sense in embedded contexts:

If Cheating is Wrong, getting one's son to Cheat is Wrong

No disapproval towards cheating is asserted

(A)

(1). If cheating is wrong, then getting one's son to cheat is wrong;

(2). Cheating is wrong;

(3). *Ergo*, getting one's son to cheat is wrong.

If we take non-cognitivism to be true, for the above argument, "cheating is wrong" in (1) does not assert a non-cognitivist expression (e.g. Boo Cheating) however (2) does assert a non-cognitivist expression

- Leads to a fallacy of equivocation that makes the argument invalid
- But the argument should be valid since the form of the argument is correct (modus ponens)

Response: Blackburn's Quasi-Realism

- Moral Language expresses attitudes on the world as if they were true
 - To account for surface logical structure of moral discourse
- Changes (A) to the following form

(1) Hooray (Boo Cheating and Boo getting one's son to cheat

(2) Boo Cheating

(3) Boo getting one's son to Cheat

- "And" instead of a conditional in (2)
- Wright: (3) is not right based on the cause that the argument is valid, but rather as a predicate of (1)
 - Rejecting (3) from (1) and (2) is a moral failing rather than a logical failing
 - Blackburn still fails to show how if-then statements in moral language can be valid

Naturalism

Goodness exists and can be observed and described

- E.g. Utilitarianism: The greatest happiness for the greatest number

BUT: Moore's Open Question Argument

- For every naturalistic explanation of goodness, one can always ask for why such an explanation is good
- E.g. Why is happiness good?
- *Leads to infinite regress which should be ignored by Occam's Razor*

	<p><u>Non-naturalism</u> Right and Wrong cannot be defined in terms of natural phenomena</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is-Ought Problem: Cannot derive something that should be the case from something that is the case <p>Moore's Intuitionism: Good and evil cannot be reduced to anything more basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar to describing a colour
<p>In contrast with OBJECTIVISM, SUBJECTIVIST/NON-COGNITIVIST views of ethics include</p>	
<p>Define Moral Relativism and Cultural Relativism and state their Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State the three main non-cognitivist theories 	<p><u>Moral Relativism</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subjectivist: Truth value varies relative to a certain context Contexts: Societal Relativism, Cultural Relativism No universal moral truths <p>Moral Laws are relative to cultures and groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No absolute Moral Law <p>Problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No room for ethical discussion as all standards are equally correct based on their own culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> However: Tolerance of other moral standards is enforced as universal law in relativism Inevitable transcultural needs that require rules to be fulfilled <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institution of Property: Distinction between 'mine' and Truth-telling Promise-giving Restraint of Violence and Killing Restraint of sexual expression Attitude to strangers, minorities and the weak Distribution of Resources Therefore: Universal rule that there should be some rule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem when Moral standards clash between cultures with both supposedly equally right Subjectivism when taken to extreme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each individual has their own moral truth No room for moral discourse No such thing as moral progress Moral Differences may not be necessarily due to different standards of morality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.g. may be due to different factual understandings E.g. Killing is wrong is a moral fact + People in Africa kill deformed infants

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Issue is not due to different moral standards but factual error that deformed infants are possessed by evil spirits <p><u>Cultural Relativism</u> Right and Wrong are relative to one's Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrong → Goes against the norms of his home culture • All cultures have different norms that are all correct • Variation: Society/Majority defines what is right/wrong <p>Problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People belong to many different cultures and subcultures • Some cultures intolerant of other cultures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Arguing that cultures should tolerate each other → Overarching ethical standard • Difficulty discerning what a culture is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ If we claim there are certain standards defining what a culture is, morality becomes objective by that standard • Implies that the majority can never be wrong <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Dissidents and reformers are always wrong (even impossible) <p><u>Emotivism</u> Ethical statements are expressions of emotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is wrong to kill → I feel bad about killing • BUT: Ethical arguments become illogical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ BUT there is some capacity for logic in ethics ◦ X is wrong → Subset of X is wrong <p><u>Expressivism</u> Ethical statements are expressions of an evaluative attitude towards a matter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the nature of moral language • Moral language is not descriptive: It does not correspond to something in reality <p><u>Prescriptivism</u> Ethical statements are personal prescriptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is wrong to kill → I do not prescribe killing
	Problems with OBJECTIVISM include...
State and Explain the two problems challenging the DCT	<p><u>The Death of God</u> Euthyphro's Dilemma: Is the good loved by the gods because it is good, or is it good because it is loved by the gods?</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horn 1: Something is good because the gods say that it is good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Good is arbitrary ◦ Good is dependent on the power of the gods → People do good only out of self-interest weighing the punishment and benefits • Horn 2: The gods say that something is good because it is good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Good comes from some greater authority beyond the gods • Plato's Resolution: Religion as the symbolic expression of morality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Religion gives morality a mythical clothing and authority ◦ Symbolism and Examples to enforce Morality <p>Problem of Suffering</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. God is an omnipotent being 2. God is a good being 3. From 1 and 2: God can and should intervene to prevent suffering if he exists 4. Suffering Exists 5. From 3 and 4: God does not exist
Turn to the person next to you and give them a high-five	<p><u>Relativism</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above
State the Is-Ought problem and its implications on naturalism and utilitarianism	<p><u>Is-Ought Problem</u></p> <p>The problem that we can only objectively observe what 'is' the case, with great difficulty to inferring from there what 'ought' to be the case</p>
Explain how Egoism threatens objectivism and explain its flaws	<p><u>Egoism</u></p> <p>The threat that ethics is ultimately a mask to justify the pursuit of self-interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fallibility of our judgements on people's motives: People may deceive or be self-deceived <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>// Problem of Induction in Social Science: Impossible to control all variables of human behavior to discern what is actually motivating a person</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>We can't control all the factors that may influence a person to do something e.g. remove all other motivations besides children to test if a man genuinely cares for said children</i> • BUT: Such a theory is unfalsifiable and unverifiable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>// Hermeneutics and Grand Unifying Theories of Castration Anxiety, Father Jealousy, Desire to bang one's Mom</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Any competing theory or opposition can be reinterpreted as repression of the above</i> • Actions for seemingly altruistic ends can also be subsumed under self-interest

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g. Person helping the old lady across the road acts out of self-interest for helping old ladies ○ BUT: Conflates self-interest with interest → Term loses predictive and explanatory force
Explain how evolutionary theory threatens Objectivism and its refutations	<p><u>Evolutionary Theory</u></p> <p>Evolutionary explanations undergird our ethical concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BUT: An evolutionary explanation for phenomena does not disprove its existence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g. sex has the adaptive function of the propagation of the species →/ Therefore when we have sex, our intention is the propagation of the species ○ The functional explanation of an action is not entirely equivalent to the intentions we have for it <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Other intentions e.g. the desire to do good deeds may undergird these ethical concerns ○ It is self-contradictory to say: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Standards of ethics have an evolutionary explanation 2. Standards of ethics do not exist <p>The behavior of Genes metaphorically explain the behavior of Humans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Derived from Dawkins' 'Selfish Gene' ● Genes replicate with an emphasis on ruthless selfish competition → Humans are ultimately selfish ● Fallacy of Multiplication ● Inference of meaning where there is none: Selfishness inferred from different chances of survival based on different actions and environments
State the two types of Determinisms	<p><u>Determinism</u></p> <p>Genetic Determinism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BUT: Room to vary response based on the circumstances ● BUT BUT: Response may ultimately be based on one's genetic makeup, environment-dependency is not free will <p>Environmental Determinism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The environments we grow up in → How we behave
Problems with SUBJECTIVISM include	
State the problem with Subjectivism // Epistemic Duty Problem above	<p><u>Unfalsifiability</u></p> <p>As ethical statements are statements of Opinion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Right and Wrong are always in the context of the subjectivist's own rather than the views of others ● No room for justifying/falsifying moral statements to reconcile competing moral views ● Cannot prescribe ethical views for other people

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Differing ethical views are not contradictory ● BUT people seem to disagree over ethical issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ X is wrong → X is wrong for everyone ● BUT: Everyone's ethical views are right → Defeats the purpose of ethics
In addition to TRUTH, when it comes to ethical knowledge, one must consider the condition of JUSTIFICATION	
<h2 style="text-align: center;"><u>Justification of Ethical Knowledge</u></h2>	
Explain the roles of justification in ethical knowledge	<p><u>Justification</u></p> <p>Definitions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To explain why particular actions are performed <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Descriptive Level 2. To evaluate the reasons for the action <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Prescriptive Level <ol style="list-style-type: none"> b. To try to get the best justification/good reasons for a belief/action/motive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Based off Ethical Theories
ETHICAL THEORIES are divided over the components of HUMAN NATURE which include...	
	<p><u>Components of Human Nature</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Agent 2. The Motive + Action 3. The Consequence
<p>State the key distinguishing factor of Deontological Schools of Thought</p> <p>Explain the definitions, advantages and disadvantages of the following Deontological Theories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DCT ● Social Contract ● Kant's CI ● Natural Law ● Egoism 	<p><u>Deontology</u></p> <p>Right and Wrong are defined by one's principles and values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Based on Action (+ Motive): Certain defined Actions (+ Motives) are Right/Wrong in themselves ● Principles → Result ● Extreme: Regardless of any situation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Divine Command Theory: God → Principles 2. Natural Law: Human Nature/Purpose → Principles 3. Kantian Ethics: Categorical Imperatives/Duties → Principles 4. Social Contract: Agreement and Obligation to fellow humans → Principles <p><u>Divine Command Theory</u></p> <p>Right and Wrong are defined by what is commanded by God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relies on the Omni-supremacy of God

- Ten Commandments + Jesus' Teachings: Certain Actions/Motives are Right/Wrong

Advantages: Certainty and Utility

- **Absolute** Moral Standard: Rules apply universally and all the time
 - E.g. Because God says so in text X
- Right and Wrong can be proven rationally
- **Perfect Justice** → Strong motive for doing Good

Disadvantages

- Uncertainty of God's existence
- Uncertainty of which god's will is right: Multiple Religions
- Uncertainty given clash in **interpretations** about Moral Rules

Euthyphro's Dilemma

- Horn 1: God commands things because they are good
 - Good prior to God's command
 - Goodness comes from a source independent of God's will (not DCT)
- Horn 2: Things are good because God commanded them
 - Any command can be made into the foundation of ethics by arbitrary divine decision

Social Contract Theory

Right and Wrong are based on the expectations of **what's best for the society** you belong to

- Subjectivist and Relativist

Justification

- Upbringing in Society → Understanding of Laws required to Remain in Society
- Remaining in Society → Agreement in social Contract to follow these Social Laws
- Locke: Right and Wrong are defined by societal consent of people living together
 - Hobbes: To prevent state of nature where people are brutal and savage
 - Rousseau: To allow for a fair competition over resources

Problems

- **Unpragmatic**: Lack of Focus on how the individual should act in particular situations
- Uncertain: Cultural Relativism
- Uncertain : Difficult to ascertain what the general will is

- Laws inform more on what is forbidden and obligatory rather than what is good and advisable

Kant's Categorical Imperative

Right and wrong are determined by whether an action is **rationally universalizable**

- Only the good will is definitely good
 - Doing something good for the sake of its **intrinsic goodness**
 - Rather than some extrinsic gain
 - Actions should be considered by their motives > consequences
 - Ethical Knowledge is derived from inevitable postulates (assumptions we can't avoid due to our rational nature)
 - Morality grounded in logic
 - Hence Kant sought to ground ethics in rationality through the categorical imperative
1. Moral actions must be **rationally universalizable**
 - a. You should only act if it makes sense to you to will that everybody acted in the same way
 - b. Out of respect of everybody's free will to engage in the same action given your circumstance
 - c. Based on the concept that morality is objective
 - d. E.g. Universalising Lying → Whole concept of Truth and Lying would break down → You would not lie in the first place → Lying is irrational an inconsistent will → You should not lie
 2. Human Beings should be treated as ends rather than means
 - a. Out of respect for their free will
 - b. To treat them as means would be to objectify a person and be held responsible for whatever consequences may result

Advantages

- Certainty: Built on Reason which is universal and absolute

Weaknesses

- **Conflicts of Duties:** E.g. Lying and Protect the Innocent
- Consequences intuitively matter
- Anscombe: For every action, there is a **variety of possible maxims**
 - "I should never lie" vs "I should never lie unless it is to protect the innocent"? (We can universalise both and be rational, with no. 2 seeming more intuitive)
 - "I should never lie" vs "I should never lie to Daryl Tan Zhe Han of 18SH03 in NJC about using his handkerchief once to

clean a dirty spot on my table” (We can universalise both and be rational, though 2 seems clearly wrong.¹

- Rationality may be a product of culture
- Schopenhauer: CI reduces to **Egoism**
 - Morality in CI is based on one’s Empathy
 - Simply a trade-off between own egoism and the egoism of others
- Hegel: CI lacks a practical application
 - The litmus test of the **presence of a contradiction** (e.g. in the case of lying) is rarely applicable

Natural Law

Right and wrong are defined by objective moral laws within human nature and the natural world

- Assumption: Human Nature and the Natural World are intrinsically good
- Morality knowable by Reason and Intuition

Aristotle

- Everything has an inherent purpose
- To be good is to fulfill one’s in-built natural purpose

Thomas Aquinas’ 7 Basic Goods

1. Life: Self-preservation
 2. Reproduction
 3. Education
 4. Seek God
 5. Community
 6. Avoid Offending others
 7. Shun Ignorance
- Specify these axioms by rational analysis and by reliance on Church, scripture, or revelation

Rational Analysis: Understanding fundamental goods and applying them to particular cases

1. Life is a basic Good
 2. My Life is valuable
 3. Others’ lives are valuable
- ∴ “I should not kill Others” is good i.e. a natural law
- Prohibitions and Positive Injunctions: The negation of something evil is good and vice versa

Advantages

¹ And not true by the way Daryl I swear I only used the edge

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic natural needs are common throughout humanity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Highly objective basis for morality ◦ Highly certain basis: Can be rationally inferred • Explains human responsibility in Divine Command Theory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ People can be responsible regardless of their knowledge of God's law because of an in-built natural law • Not based on consequences that are often unpredictable • Universal and independent of culture and society <p>Objections</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Violations of Natural Law prove that man has no natural inclinations to the good <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Aquinas' response: Ignorance and Emotion are the causes of our violations 2. Assumes the existence of God: Highly debatable 3. Is-Ought Problem: Just because something is this way ≠ something should be this way <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Observed Good for survival = Good? b. Counter-example: Reproduction is good for survival but is not always good e.g. sex crimes c. Human Nature could be in Flux as we progress <p>Egoism</p> <p>Right and Wrong are based on whether they benefit oneself</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only each individual knows what they want • Market of competing wants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ People should make rational self-serving choices to compete for own goods <p>Criticism for Consequences: What if self-interest → Harm someone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harming somebody would lead to long-term effect of them harming me back → Not to my interest
<p>State the key distinguishing factor of Utilitarian Schools of Thought</p> <p>Explain the definitions, advantages and disadvantages of the following Utilitarianism</p>	<p>Consequentialism</p> <p>Right and Wrong are based on the end result of actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The same act may not be the right action in all situation • Result → Principles <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilitarianism: Greatest happiness for the greatest number → Result <p>Utilitarianism</p> <p>Right = Consequence that yields the greatest Happiness for the greatest Number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happiness is intrinsically good in an of itself • Fundamental Moral Principle: Principle of Utility

- Bring about the Greatest Happiness for the Greatest Number
- ≠ Egoism: Greatest Happiness for Self

Jeremy Bentham: Basic Utilitarianism

- Believed in psychological egoism: Humans are ultimately seeking their own pleasure
- Act Utilitarianism: The POU applies directly to actions
 - Rather than for the formation of rules and principles
- Hedonic Calculus: SINEP
 1. Pain Involved
 2. Enhancement: Whether it leads to future happiness
 3. Nearness: Immediacy and Certainty
 4. Intensity
 5. Short-Term/LT
 - Consider the people affected most by the action
 - Measure and find the net pleasure

John Stuart Mill: Addition of Quality

- Higher vs Lower Pleasures: E.g. Learning vs Eating Good
 - We are not satisfied with illusory pleasures e.g. experience machine
- Rule Utilitarianism: The POU is applied to come up with rules to govern types of action
- Proof of Utilitarianism:
 - Happiness is desirable to all
 - Desiring something = Thinking of Something as Pleasant i.e. something that- will make one happy
 - All other desires constitute part of Happiness
 - Therefore Happiness is the ultimate end consequence

Advantages

- Pragmatism
 - Simple and Straightforward with only One rule
 - Democratic in valuing all as equal
 - Happiness is largely favoured
 - Avoids Religious Difficulties
- Certainty
 - Empirical: Scientific and Measurable
 - Avoids Religious Difficulties
 - Existence of God

Disadvantages

- **Is-Ought problem**
- **Hedonism** (Contradicts Intuition)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The case of the happy torturer: Morally right to torture somebody if the happiness you derive exceeds his pain ● Psychological Egoism (self-interested pursuit of pleasure as fundamental, contradicts intuition) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not verifiable/falsifiable: No certainty ○ Ample evidence of altruism e.g. martyrhood ● Hedonic Calculus (Certainty Issues) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Difficult to quantify pleasure given subjective nature ○ Fluid Evaluation Basis: Two people can come to wildly different conclusions by factors they consider ○ Pain and Pleasure not mutually exclusive: e.g. Masochism ● Quantity of Pleasure (Contradicts Intuition) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pursuit of the highest pleasure is impractical: We should always be having sex > eating food ○ Net pleasure allows for inequality of pleasure: Distribution of Utility not considered ○ Quantity of Pleasure does not fully capture what we desire in life ● Act Utilitarianism (Pragmatic Issues) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No time to calculate in Emergencies ○ Too Demanding: Every instance of your own pleasure could be an instance of someone else's greater pleasure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conflates Superegotary (the permissible and good) into the obligatory or forbidden ■ Moral binary is hard to fulfill ■ BUT: If we make rules that are more lenient for others to follow → Utilitarian in maximising happiness ○ Negative Responsibility: Utilitarianism demands that we are responsible for actions that we do not take <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ E.g. we ought to actively lie about the whereabouts of Jews during the Holocaust as the pain of lying < the pain of the Jews ■ Trivial things become a moral issue: Does my pleasure of buying the he bao dan at the caifan stall outweigh the pain the uncle would derive from frying it for me? ■ Makes us causally responsible for things we are never aware of ○ Condone outrageously unjust actions for the greater good ○ Interesting Implication: Sentient animals put on the same moral standing in Pleasure-seeking motive
<p>State the key distinguishing factor of Virtue Ethics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain its advantages 	<p><u>Virtue Ethics</u></p> <p>Right and wrong are determined by the commitment to be good and virtuous</p>

and disadvantages

- Agent-centred > Action-centred
- Virtues > Rules: Nurtured reliable traits that encourage one to behave in a good manner
- Holistic > Atomistic
- By rational thought > Instinct and Intuition

Central Concerns

- What is the good life as a Human Being?
- What kind of Person should I want to Become?

Aristotle

- All things have a function

Aristotle's Virtues

- Imagine and seek to be an Ideal person
 - Humans are imperfect but should strive to be perfect

The Mean: Good lies in the mean of extremes of character traits

- Deficiency - Mean - Excess
- Cowardice - Courage - Rashness

Eudaimonism

- Proper goal of human life is flourishing in fulfilling one's function well
- Abstraction from fact that every action aims at some good

Ethics of Care

- Emphasis on character traits
 - Particularly feminine ones e.g. care due to origin in 20th century feminist thinkers
- Solidarity, Community and Relationships > Universal standards and impartiality

Agent-based Theory

- Virtues based on common-sense intuitions we as observers judge to be admirable traits in people we admire
 - People we admire: Moral Exemplars

Advantages

- Intuitive: Can criticise a person for having wrong character traits
 - E.g. a Misogynist who hasn't done anything yet
 - BUT: Is the person a misogynist if he hasn't done anything misogynistic
- Pragmatism: Unifies moral demands with self-interest

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Uncodifiability of Ethics Thesis: Ethics is too diverse to be captured in rigid code <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Flexibility with different situations ○ Not too demanding as the agent is heavily considered <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No justification as to what makes a person virtuous <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g. Courage = Good Virtue requires some source to explain its goodness ● No justification that humans have a function <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Certainty ● Inadequate guidance on how to act beyond the principle of acting virtuously ● Self-centred: Focus on agent's character rather than effects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BUT: The two are not mutually exclusive, effects → desirable character traits ● Leads to Cultural Relativism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BUT: Perhaps Universal Virtues present across cultures ○ Differences due to local interpretations
	<p>Categorise Later: Ethical Egoism</p> <p>Right and wrong are defined by what furthers our own interests</p>

