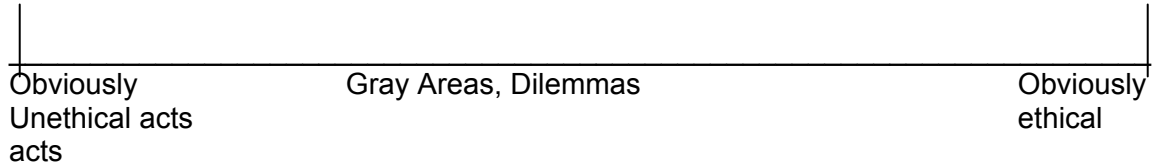


Ethics Tool Chest

Ethics Continuum



What makes an act morally good? What makes a person morally good? Why do we care if others act morally? Why do we care if we act morally?

ETHICS and MORALITY

The words *ethics/ethical* and *morality/moral* are often used interchangeably in conversation. In reality,

- **Morality (moral)** is a first-order set of beliefs and practices about how to live a good life and refers to an individual's actions or character as good or bad in terms of particular codes of conduct.
- **Ethics (ethical)** is a second-order set of beliefs and includes conscious reflection on the adequacy of our moral beliefs. It also refers to the formal study of those codes and their underlying principles, often referring to professional codes of behavior.

Two Types of Values

Value is a morally neutral term that merely indicates preference and can be quite banal.

Non-moral Values include good health, aesthetic values, reputation, money, power, fame, national integrity and solidarity. Group behavior is more often motivated by non-moral values than is individual behavior (Boss, Ethics, 226).

Only **Moral Values** carry the force of the "ought" or "should" and thus take precedence over the non-moral values. When making moral decisions, we use **descriptive statements** about the world and human nature (e.g., "I saw Mommy kissing Santa Claus") along with **prescriptive statements** about moral values (e.g., "Mothers ought not/should not kiss men who enter houses through the chimney"). Good intentions are insufficient to guide our moral decisions.

The Underlying Principle of Most Moral Systems: Respect for Persons

At least one important principle underlies almost all ethical systems: the principle of respect for persons. As philosopher Errol E. Harris explains, this principle has three requirements:

First, that each and every person should be regarded as worthy of sympathetic consideration, and should be so treated; secondly, that no person should be regarded by another as a mere possession, or used as a mere instrument, or treated as a mere obstacle, to another's satisfaction; and thirdly, that persons are not and ought never to be treated in any undertaking as mere expendables.

("Respect for Persons," *Daedalus*, Spring, 1969, p. 113)

As Vincent Ryan Ruggiero, professor emeritus at SUNY, Dehli, and author of many books on thinking and ethics, points out, however,

This is not to say that respect for persons is always interpreted in the same way or that it is always given precedence over other values. In some cultures *person* is defined not broadly, as "all members of the species *Homo sapiens*," but narrowly, as "a member of our tribe" or "one who enjoys the rights of citizenship." In the tribal languages of some headhunters and cannibals, the word used to denote a person is the tribal name; to be outside the tribe is thus, by definition, to be a nonperson. (73)

Thus the practice of slavery in Roman society and in American history is based on such an interpretation. Likewise, many people may endorse the principle of respect for persons, but have lapses in its observance, or may at times subordinate it to other values, such as the good of society as a whole.

Ethical Analysis

Ethical analysis is a complex process. It involves thinking deeply about:

- Ethical criteria (obligations, ideals, and consequences)
- Types of ethics
- Types of ethical theories
- Levels of thinking

Ethical Analysis--Criteria

The following 3 criteria are for thinking about and making moral decisions. The trick is not to settle for the first response or the easy response, but to really think about the issues. They are obligations, ideals, and consequences.

1. Obligations

Obligations of Fidelity (formal bond of faith to people or institutions, e.g., friendship, citizenship, business, professional relationships).

Obligations of Reparation (we should amend wrongs we've committed by removing as many harmful consequences caused by those wrongs as possible).

Obligations of Gratitude (we should demonstrate our appreciation for the Considerations that others show us)

Obligations of Justice (we should give each person equal consideration without Showing partiality to anyone's interests including our own; differences in treatment should be in proportion to differences in what the facts show each person deserves).

Obligations of Beneficence (we should do good acts for their own sake).

2. Ideals

Ideals are notions of excellence, goals that bring greater harmony in your own self and between your self and others. In ethics, Ideals are specific concepts that assist us in applying the principle of respect for persons (e.g., fairness, tolerance, compassion, loyalty, forgiveness, amity, and peace).

3. Consequences

Consequences include:

- **Direct effects** on all the people touched by the action
- **Indirect effects on others**
- Direct and indirect effects **on you** (the person performing the action)
- Psychological effects on you, on others, on society as a whole
- **Emotional effects** on you, on others, on society as a whole
- **Immediate effects** on you, on others, on society as a whole
- **Delayed effects** on you, on others, on society as a whole
- **Short-lasting effects** on you, on others, on society as a whole
- **Long-lasting effects** on you, on others, on society as a whole

To determine consequences, use this approach: "***If X, then the consequences would be Y on Q.***" Think about the situation from several different points of view. Use your imagination to see deeply into the consequences and potential consequences of the action(s) contemplated.

Please notice that:

- The most *moral* action is the action that most fully honors the obligations, ideals, and consequences involved
- Different moral systems give different weight to these criteria (e.g., some might emphasize obligations over consequences, or ideals over obligations)
- Usually, nothing is easy since two different criteria might be in conflict
 - When such conflicts occur, the best we can do is to consider the relative importance of each and give preference to the more important one.
 - If both criteria can be partly served, then they should be (rather than serving one fully and ignoring the other entirely)
- One standard criterion is: chose the action
 - that leads to the greater good
 - or, if there is no good, select the action that leads to the lesser evil

Four Types of Ethics--Personal, Interpersonal, Social, & Environmental

Personal Ethics: the most basic level, concerned with us as individuals--our own growth as virtuous people and our search for the good life. Almost all ethicists stress the importance of cultivating a virtuous character and developing proper self-esteem.

Interpersonal Ethics: day-to-day relationships with other people, the rightness or wrongness of particular actions, the nature of our obligations toward others and their obligations toward us.

Social Ethics: As we mature, our "moral community expands from our immediate family to our peers to humanity in general (i.e., the moral community includes all those beings who have moral worth or value in themselves ... we include more as members of our tribe).

Environmental Ethics: Two approaches to environmental ethics.

- Most Western philosophers and theologians maintain that only humans can be members of the moral community, so our only obligation to the environment and animals is to preserve them for the benefit of humankind.

- Others--e.g., Buddhists, Jainists (Jainism is an India philosophy/religion), many Native American philosophers--argue that the environment itself has moral worth so the integrity of environment ought to be preserved for its own sake. (Boss 12)

Types of Ethical Theories

1. **Relativist Theories**—These theories state that there are no independent moral values; morality is created by humans.
 - **Ethical subjectivism:** moral truth is a matter of individual opinion or feeling
 - **Cultural relativism:** morals are created not by individuals but by groups of humans, and morality differs from society to society; each society has its own moral norms that are binding only on members of that society -- and each society also defines who is and who is not a member of that society
 - These two are mutually exclusive--either the individual or the society creates the moral norms
2. **Universalist Theories**—These theories state that there are universal moral values that apply to all humans and, in some cases, beyond the human community. Morality is **discovered** by humans (not **created** by them); i.e., the basic standards of right and wrong are derived from principles that exist independently of the individual or of societal opinion. Different types of universalist theories overlap (they are not mutually exclusive)--each emphasizes one particular aspect of morality rather than providing a comprehensive picture. Almost all ethicists include aspects of more than one universalist theory in their moral philosophy.

Three Levels of Thinking--Experience, Interpretation, Analysis

1. **Experience:** We simply **describe** our experiences or give accurate information.
 - "I felt angry when Cathy lied to me."
 - "The average annual income of men is higher than that of women."
2. **Interpretation** involves trying to make sense of our experience in light of our other experiences. This includes individual interpretations and collective or cultural interpretations. Taken together, interpretations form a **worldview**. Our worldview regarding a particular aspect of our experience (e.g., science, ethics) is a **paradigm**.
 - "What Cathy did to me was wrong."
 - "Men are more competent than women and thus receive higher incomes."
3. **Analysis** critically examines our worldview. It draws on other disciplines (e.g., psychology, sociology, literature, natural sciences) and on fundamental moral intuitions, moral sentiments, and collective insights. Analysis raises our level of consciousness and refuses to accept narrow interpretations of our experience. Analysis often begins with questions about the assumptions underlying our interpretations.
 - "Is lying always wrong? Was Cathy's lying justified in those circumstances? Did something I said or some attitude of mine encourage or even force her to lie?"
 - "Are the facts regarding unemployment and competency correct? If they are, does any of compensation really indicate the degree of competence? Is it fair or just to pay less based on gender?"

Pluralistic View of Ethics

Assumptions:

- “We should attempt to live successfully with *all* other persons” (Birsch 174)
- To live successfully with others, people need “ethical guidelines that enable them to maintain their special relationships with particular persons” (Birsch 177)
- To be successful in solving ethical problems with particular groups of people, an ethical theory must:
 - Produce ethical guidelines
 - Demonstrate that some guidelines are better than others
 - Prohibit the “unlimited pursuit of self-interest”(Birsch 175)
 - Produce effective solutions to ethical problems
- Birsch thus eliminates theories of divine command, ethical egoism and subjectivism, and ethical relativism (175)

Types of Ethics

There are several different types of ethical theories.

A General Way of Thinking About Ethics

1. **Greatest good for greatest number** (we need to know **consequences** to be able to judge)--utilitarianism
2. **Equal respect and the Golden Rule**
 - a. Every person is an object of intrinsic worth
 - b. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity and quality
 - c. The **Golden Rule**—be **consistent** (treat others as you want to be treated)
3. **Relationship**
 - a. Relationships are intrinsically valuable (friendship, companionship, caring, loving, affection, etc.)
 - b. Judge actions on their potential to build or hinder meaningful relationships
4. **Community**
 - a. A community can be a network of relationships. In this case, actions that damage relationships between community members are unethical
 - b. Or a community can be structured groups (e.g., teams) that allow people to pursue shared goals and values. In this case, any action is unethical that is inconsistent with the values a community serves and that thus weakens members’ feeling of shared beliefs and common goals
5. **Character growth**
 - a. do our actions make us more or less like the ideal person we want to be?
 - b. Behaving unethically will eventually harm us in some way
 - c. Could ignoring evil (or merely unpleasant behavior) make you more evil or unpleasant yourself?

A More Specific Way to Think About Ethics

Virtue Ethics

1. **Virtue** is a quality of character by which individuals habitually recognize and do “the right thing.”
2. **Virtue ethics** emphasizes **right being** over **right action**. The theory is that the type of person we are constitutes the heart of our moral life.

- a. More important than the rules or principles we follow is our **character**.
 - b. A moral virtue is an admirable character trait or disposition to habitually action in a manner that benefits oneself and others.
 - c. The actions of virtuous people stem from a respect and concern for the well-being of themselves and others—e.g., compassion, courage, generosity, loyalty, honesty.
 - d. Virtue is more than a collection of individual traits, however. Virtue is the “overarching quality of goodness or excellence that gives unity and integrity to a person’s character” (Boss 402)
 - e. Virtue ethics and theories of right action complement each other; they are not alternatives to each other.
 - f. As Aristotle says, “We are not concerned to know what goodness is, but how we are to become good men, for this alone gives the study [of ethics] its practical value.” (*Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. 2, Ch. 2).
2. The **4** classical virtues (from Aristotle):
 - a. **Prudence** (practical wisdom)
 - b. **Justice** (includes fairness, honesty, keeping promises)
 - c. **Fortitude** (courage to pursue the right path despite great risks)
 - d. **Temperance** (self-discipline--the control of human passions, sensual pleasures, anger, frustration, food, drink, sex)
 3. The Greeks added
 - a. **Loyalty**
 4. The Hebrews added
 - a. **Obedience to God**
 5. Christianity added 3 theological virtues + 1 for Catholic sainthood:
 - a. **Faith**
 - b. **Hope**
 - c. **Charity**
 - d. **Humility**
 6. And philosophers such as Nel Noddings added
 - a. **Compassion and caring**
 - b. Care ethics regards feeling rather than reason or formal moral principles as the foundation of ethics.
 - c. Noddings says that “morality is an ‘active virtue’ that requires two feelings: (1) the sentiment of natural caring and (2) love, which our response to the remembrance of caring” (Boss 417).
 7. Thus, an ethical person is someone who through repeated good acts achieves an appropriate balance of these virtues in his/her life.
 8. Good character comes from living in communities—family, neighborhoods, religious and civic institutions—where virtue is encouraged and rewarded.
 9. Aristotle suggested that youth imitate the actions and attitudes of people acknowledged to be ethical in order to learn ethical behavior and ideas.

Utilitarianism

1. Utilitarianism is oriented toward a particular goal: the greatest net happiness for all. It emphasizes **right action** over **right being**. Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill are 2 major architects of utilitarianism.
2. Actions themselves are neither intrinsically right or wrong
3. The rightness or wrongness of an action is determined solely by its consequences—in other words, the ends justify the means”

4. "The greatest good for the greatest number."
5. And every person's happiness counts equally (including the agent's—the person performing the act cannot count his/her own gain in happiness as more important than the happiness of anyone else)
6. Utilitarian calculus had several elements that had to be considered when judging whether to act or not (Bentham and Mill), including
 - a. Intensity: How strong is the pleasure?
 - b. Duration: How long will the pleasure last?
 - c. Certainty or uncertainty: How likely or unlikely is it that the pleasure will occur?
 - d. Propinquity or remoteness: How soon will the pleasure occur?
 - e. Extent: How many people will be affected?
7. For a satiric version of utilitarian calculus, see <http://swiftmagazine.com/backissues/swift-1-3-9.pdf>)

Egalitarian ethical theories

1. Egalitarian ethical theories say that everyone is a moral equal
 - a. Kantian ethics—our ethical treatment of different people in similar situations must be consistent (182).
 - b. Moral rights theory—avoid violations of the moral rights of others
2. Kantian and Moral Rights both establish a "moral minimum" (183) with regards to persons in general.
3. Birsch prefers Moral Rights Theory because it is clearer and more precise than acting from personal rules that we could conflict into universal laws (183)

Which types of ethics best apply to the various types of relationships we have?

Relationships with Family and Friends

- Ethics of care because it recognizes that the **most relevant moral factor** is our special relationships with these people, giving them more attention, etc
- To use this ethics, we must "apprehend the other's reality and promote his or her welfare" (178)—According to Boss, abortion is not unethical if it allows you to continue to be successful as "a one-caring (to oneself and to others)" (Boss 178)

Relationships with Colleagues, Teammates, and Members of Organizations

- Virtue ethics because the "most relevant moral factor ...is that the members of these collectives share a common goal or purpose" (Boss 179)—the goal substitutes for Aristotle's "human function" as the foundation of virtue ethics
- A "well-lived life in the corporate or organizational context, is one in which a person thrives as an individual but also is successful at supporting the corporate or organizational mission" (Boss 179)
- The significant virtue varies with the group, but teamwork and hard work are virtues for any group
- Virtue ethics will not be 100% successful, but it's better than any of the other ethical theories. Yet it will not help us evaluate the group's goal itself.

Relationships with Members of the Same Ethic Group, Gender, Nation

- Virtue ethics because, although these people are bound by "accidental factual connection," many within the group share the same goals (as with organizations),

so common goal is the most relevant moral factor (180) (e.g., many women share the feminist goal of eliminating male domination)

- Patriotism and civic duty are 2 virtues related to being American (181)

Relationships with People as “Persons”

- Egalitarian ethical theory because the most relevant moral factor is that everyone is a moral equal
- The best can't be utilitarianism because it sacrifices the minority to the majority and our goal is to treat everyone as morally equal person
- Kantian ethics—our ethical treatment of different people in similar situations must be consistent (182). This theory could work
- Moral rights theory—avoid violations of the moral rights of others would work as well
- Kantian and Moral Rights both establish a “moral minimum” (183) with regards to persons in general
 - Birsch prefers Moral Rights Theory because it is clearer and more precise than acting from personal rules that we could will into universal laws (183)

Implications of Pluralistic View of Ethics

1. We need first to identify the relationships(s) with the person(s) involved and use the appropriate ethical theory theories. (184)
2. Sometimes we face conflicting obligations or possess limited resources and must decide who will receive them
3. Two types of conflicts:
 - a. Conflicting moral obligations to two (or more) persons that allow us to act in accord with only one of them but without violating the ethical guidelines of the other theory (kayaking with a friend or taking kids to ball game) (184)
 - b. Or acting in accord with the obligations generated by one theory associated with one person would violate the ethical guidelines of another theory connected with another person (taking kids to ballgame while rest of my office struggle to meet a crucial deadline)
 - c. Birsch opts for privileging closer relationships but also of balancing obligations so that the demands of each are satisfied to a degree sufficient to maintain the relationships (185)
 - d. “The key is to act in ways that minimize conflict among the various ethical obligations connected to the different persons and, when conflicts are inevitable, to try to obtain an overall balance regarding the fulfillment of the obligations generated in connection with all of them.” (186)

Moral Arguments

1. An implicit, unstated premise or belief is an **assumption**
2. An argument is a set of statements or propositions that perform two different but related functions
 - States the **conclusion** (or thesis or position being argued for)—usually stated in a single (often very complex) declarative sentence

- Provides reasons (called **premises**) supporting that conclusion—these are usually expressed in declarative sentences
3. An argument has two or more premises and one conclusion
 4. We move from the premises to the conclusion through a process of **inference**.
 5. Truth or falsehood of a proposition can be based on
 - Empirical facts (descriptive statement)--"AIDS is currently one of the leading causes of death of young adults in the US"
 - Lexical definition of a key term (descriptive statement)--"*Lying* is any intentionally deceptive message that is stated" is such a definition.
 - Moral prescriptive statements --"it is wrong for us to hurt others for our own amusement."

Steps for Constructing a Moral Argument (Boss, *Ethics* 56)

1. **List your premises.** In a good argument, the premises will be relatively uncontroversial and should be acceptable to all or most reasonable people. It is important to identify relevant moral principles, obligations, ideals, and consequences. It is important to get the facts straight.
2. **Eliminate irrelevant or weak premises.** Resist the impulse to eliminate premises that disagree with your particular opinion regarding the issue. Make sure there are no obvious gaps in the list of premises.
3. **Come to a conclusion.** Your conclusion should take into account the info contained in the premises but should not state more than is in them.
4. **Try out the argument on others.**

Analyzing Issues

1. Consider details of the situation carefully--are there any circumstances that set this situation apart from otherwise similar cases (circumstances do alter cases). If you don't have enough details, speculate about possible answers.
2. Identify the specific criteria that are relevant to the case--i.e., are there any obligations (and to whom)? what ideals are involved? what are the possible consequences?
3. Decide where the emphasis should lie--e.g., sometimes the emphasis should be on obligations, sometimes on consequences. Often, of course, the force of all 3 are very nearly equal.
4. Determine all possible choices of action that are (or, in the case of a past action, were) available.
5. Then decide which action is most ethical/moral.

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Analyzing a Particular Situation

1. Agatha, a married woman with 3 children, is in the habit of often seeing her unmarried minister alone. Since the relationship began several years ago in a mutual interest in intellectual and social issues, it has grown and expanded. Agatha's daily visits to the minister's home and his frequent visits to hers, sometimes when her husband is at home but often when he is not, have become the subject of community gossip and are threatening both their reputations. There has been no overt sexual dimension to the relationship; it has remained platonic. Lately, however, Agatha has begun to have sexual thoughts about the minister. Is it morally wrong for her to continue the relationship?

Step 1. **Details we don't know:** how old are the children? How solid and mutually nourishing was Agatha's relationship with her husband before she began her relationship with the minister? If there have been problems in her marriage, has she discussed them with her husband? Have they made any progress in solving them? Has Agatha discussed with her minister the direction in which their relationship seems to be heading? If so, what was his reaction? What other possibilities does Agatha have for social life and intellectual fulfillment?

Step 2. **Relevant criteria:**

Obligations

- Agatha has obligation to herself to exercise her intellect and realize her potential

- She has obligation of fidelity (as a wife) to her husband (as he does to her) to build and nurture a mutually satisfying physical and emotional relationship
- She has obligation of fidelity (as mother) to her children to provide a home and atmosphere conducive to children's physical, emotional, moral, and intellectual development
- The minister has obligation of fidelity (to his church) to serve his congregation's religious and spiritual needs, to set a good example

Ideals

- Marital fidelity
- Honesty with self and friends

Consequences of continuing the relationship

- It is unlikely that Agatha's marriage will be strengthened--in fact, the reverse is much more likely (at the very least, more tension in the marriage, perhaps infidelity, perhaps divorce)
- It will likely damage the minister's vocation--destroy his effectiveness, jeopardize his job

Step 3. Alternative Courses of Action

- Agatha could end the platonic relationship
- She could see the minister less frequently and never alone with him in his or her house (this would be more effective if combined with attempts to renew her relationship with her husband and find other social and intellectual outlets)

Step 4. Weigh the various criteria.

- Obligations, ideals, and consequences are of pretty equal force here

Step 5. Decide on the most moral course of action.

- Most of the criteria suggest that Agatha should not continue the relationship with the minister in its present form--it does cause harm now and will likely cause more harm in the future
- If her relationship with husband was reasonably sound before she met the minister, then she should end the relationship with the minister
- If her relationship with her husband had already begun to deteriorate before she met the minister and is beyond rebuilding, then she should consider leaving him--the age of her children might be a factor in this decision
- If she does leave husband, the possible effects of scandal on the minister should influence her decision of whether to continue the relationship after leaving her husband

Please note: the above is not a complete analysis of the whole situation--it analyzes what Agatha should do. Certainly other factors are involved here--e.g., the obligations of justice and beneficence, the ideal of loyalty, and numerous consequences (direct and indirect). In addition, the minister's situation and possible decision are not taken into account.

Some Situations for Moral Analysis

1. A scientist signs a 2-year contract with Big Lab for \$75,000/year. Four months later she is offered a 2-year contract by Bigger Lab (a competitor of Big Lab) for \$150,000/year. She tells Big Lab that she is breaking her contract and signing with Bigger Lab. The courts can deal with the legality of her decision. Examine the morality in terms of obligations, ideals, and consequences.

2. Same scenario except that the scientist has discovered during the first 4 months with Big Lab that her husband has quit his job and run off to places unknown with another woman and has started divorce proceeding. He has made it clear to her that he and his girlfriend will live in the wilderness somewhere living off the land; he will have no money with which to pay child support and he has legally turned all responsibility for their 3 children to her.

Background for #3

Hans Jonas has suggested that in considering the ethical character of scientific experiments we should distinguish between "averting a disaster" and "prompting a good" ("Philosophical Reflections on Human Experimentation," *Daedalus*, Spring 1969, 229f). In the first, where the goal is *saving society*, Jonas concedes that extraordinary means may be used. However, in the latter, where the goal, *improving society*, is less urgent, such means should not be tolerated. According to Jonas,

Our descendants have a right to be left an unplundered planet. They do not have a right to miracle cures. We have sinned against them if by our doing we have destroyed their inheritance--which we are doing at full blast; we have not sinned against them if by the time they come around arthritis has not yet been conquered (unless by sheer neglect). And generally, in the matter of progress, as humanity had no claim on a Newton, a Michelangelo, or a St. Francis to appear, and no right to the blessings of their unscheduled deeds, so progress, with all our methodical labor for it, cannot be budgeted in advance and its fruits received as a due. Its coming about at all and its turning out for the good (of which we can never be sure) must rather be regarded as something akin to grace. (229)

3. David D. Rutstein made the following assertions about the selection and design of scientific experiments. Do you agree?

- "In selecting a question for human experimentation, the expectation of benefit to the subject and to mankind must clearly far exceed the risk to the human subject" ("The Ethical Design of Human Experiments," , *Daedalus*, Spring 1969, 529)
- "It may be accepted as a maxim that a poorly or improperly designed study involving human subjects--one that could not possibly yield scientific facts (that is, reproducible observations) relevant to the question under study--is by definition unethical Any risk to the patient, however small, cannot be justified. In essence, the scientific validity of a study on human beings is in itself an ethical principle" (524).

3. Throughout history, it has been the practice in many countries to use convicts in scientific experiments. If, e.g., researchers develop a chemical that preliminary exploratory work indicates will cure a fatal disease, they may seek volunteers from prison populations, administer the chemical to them, and determine its effect on the human body. Or a psychologist studying the effects of extreme variations in climate on the human body may subject consenting prisoners to such variations and test their reactions. Though such experiments are usually very carefully designed to minimize the risk to participants, an element of risk always remains. The participants may become ill or even die of unexpected physical or emotional effects. Because of this danger, volunteers are usually promised special privileges during the course of the experiment and even a reduction of their prison sentences. In cases involving unusual risk, full

pardons may be promised. Is it ethical to use prisoners for such experiments? Is it ethical to provide such inducements to volunteers?

3.1. Sometimes medical school professors encourage their students to volunteer for research experiments--the only reward being the emotional satisfaction of having contributed to progress and perhaps some brownie points). Is such encouragement ethically permissible?

4. Given the threat that nuclear weapons pose for humanity, it is ever morally acceptable for scientists to engage in research and development work on such weapons? Discuss the conditions, if any, under which it would be acceptable.

5. Given the threat that biological weapons pose for humanity, it is ever morally acceptable for scientists to engage in research and development work on such weapons? Discuss the conditions, if any, under which it would be acceptable

Moral Situations and Dilemmas

1. Because medical resources are limited for such thing as organ transplants and expensive cancer treatments, we must decide how they should be allocated. If a person knowingly engages in behavior that could jeopardize her health, should this be taken into consideration when allocating scarce resources? What about the person's age? Occupation?
 - a. How is your answer influenced by your attitude toward free will vs. determinism?
2. Discuss how your current government policies toward vulnerable populations (the homeless, children, prisoners, families living in poverty) are influenced by a philosophical view of human behavior as free or determined.
3. Select a simple experience--a man holding a door open for a woman, a student giving a dollar to a beggar on the street. Discuss different interpretations of the experience.
4. Using the three-tiered (experience, interpretation, analysis) model of thinking, discuss the following:
 - a. **Fact**--Social scientists have found that a person is more likely to help those who are most like them.
 - b. **Situation**--Professor Q has blue eyes and blonde hair. She offers out-of-class extra help and tutoring only to students who are blond and blue-eyed. Answer the following questions:
 - i. Is it morally right for Prof. Q to give preference to students who look like her? Why or why not?
 - ii. Would it make any difference if she believed that she was right to do so?
 - iii. What if her intentions are good? For example, what if she genuinely believed that only blue-eyed blond students had intellectual potential and believed that it was unfair to give tutoring to non-blue-eyed non-blond people and thus give them the false hope that they might be able to succeed in college?
 - iv. Or what if she believed that blue-eyed blond students were the ones who were least likely to understand the material?

- c. Make a list of the general guidelines that you use in making moral decisions, including your decisions about the morality of Professor Q.

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