



HUMN 445

Principles of Ethics



Chapter One

The Need for Ethics

**Ethics is a part of our lives...
no matter where we look.**

The question is what is our code?

**Relativist push the notion that anything goes...
with sex and anything else.**

Samuel Johnson said,

**“If he does really think that
there is no distinction
between virtue and vice, why,
sir, when he leave our houses
let us count our spoons.”**



**However, our world today
is filled with moral relativism.**

**At universities like DeVry, there are those
for whom plagiarism is morally okay.**

Do we need ethics if we have laws?

**How did we come up with laws
without some sort of ethics?**

**In addition, time and circumstances
change...therefore, laws will also.**

**For millennia, the issue of homosexuality
was codified into a law.**

Today, that issue is being reviewed morally.

**For centuries, rape cases needed to show
“earnest resistance”
if the rapist was going go to trial.**



**What are some other issues
that have changed over time?**

**Human rights for minorities or women,
personal freedom.....**

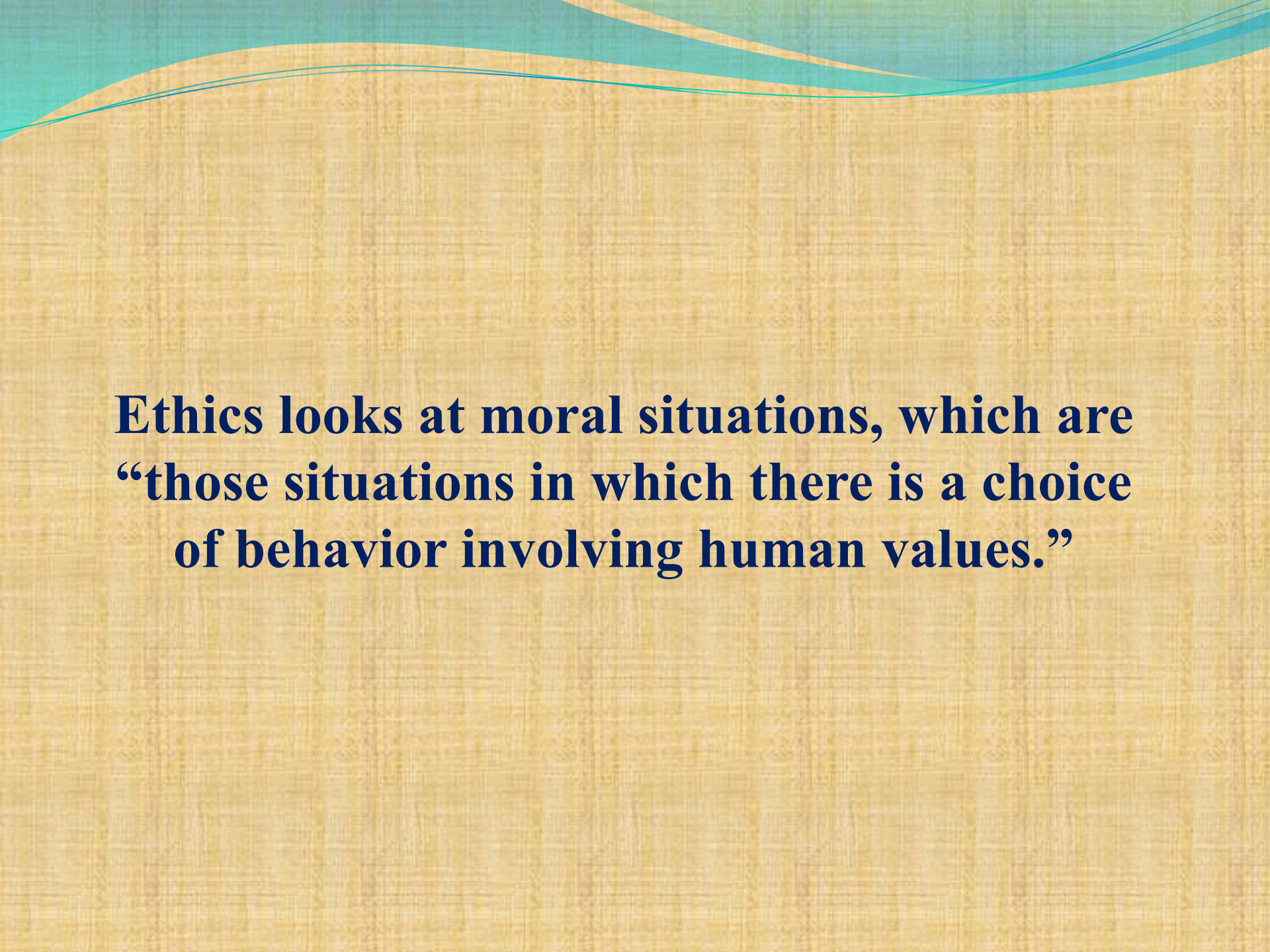
Ethics defined....

Normative ethics = the setting of rules/guidelines

Metaethics = close look at the logic/system of the ethical question



**Moral choices are determined
by a group of ideas from some sort
of moral understanding or perspective.**



**Ethics looks at moral situations, which are
“those situations in which there is a choice
of behavior involving human values.”**

The text says, “Ethicists are not lawmakers.”

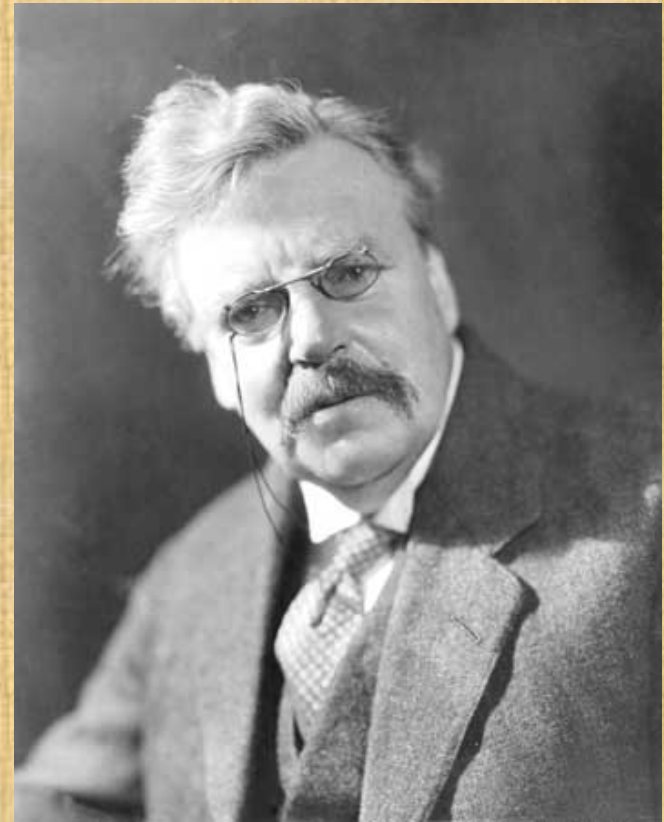
**Ethics deal with what *ought* to be done...
not what has to be done or you go to jail.**

Degrees of responsibility or *culpable* are similar to the degrees of guilt in the legal profession.

Watch what happens in Ferguson, MO.

Ethics and Religious Belief

“Morality did not begin by one man saying to another, ‘I will not hit you if you do not hit me.’...They gained their morality by guarding their religion.”



G. K. Chesterton

**However, when the religious leaders move from
“speaking to society and begin speaking for it”
a problem arises.**

**Think about issues where that has happened.
Some issues would be abortion, stem cell
research, cloning, artificial insemination, etc.**

Attempts to deal with ethical statements based upon theology of Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, etc. are problematic at best.

**All these religions have ethics,
which are tied to their individual's faith.**

**This is hardly a basis for universal agreement
on an ethical decision that is based
on a particular faith.**

Ethics is needed beyond a religion and/or laws.

Examples: Voodoo's animal sacrifice, an untreated baby dies of meningitis because God will *cure* the child, and the clown with "random acts of kindness".

Ethics provide a reason for decisions that are made.



Preliminary Guidelines

**We usually have prejudgments already at hand;
check the following guidelines:**

- 1. Be aware of your first impressions.**
- 2. Check to be sure you have all the relevant facts**
- 3. Consider the various opinions on the issue and the argument that have been used to support them.**
- 4. Keep your thinking flexible.**
- 5. Express your judgments precisely and explain the reasoning that underlies it.**



**Why did you decide the way you did?
Make sure you know.**

Doing Research on the Internet

Google it...if you aren't aware of a good site.



Evaluating Your Information Sources

What is the purpose of the publication / website?

What is the source's point of view?

Does the source engage in personal attacks?

Does the source make extravagant assertions?

Does the source present evidence for his/her assertions?

What criticisms have been made, or could be made, of the source's assertions and evidence?

How worthy are those criticisms?

Making Discussion Meaningful

Avoid argumentation and debate techniques that fill radio/TV arguments...interrupting, yelling, etc.

Guidelines for meaningful discussions:

- 1. Prepare in advance.**
- 2. Set reasonable expectations.**
- 3. Avoid egotism and personal agendas.**
- 4. Contribute but avoid dominating.**
- 5. Avoid mannerisms.**
- 6. Listen actively—getting inside the other side**
- 7. Be a responsible judge of issues.**
- 8. Do not interrupt and engage in a verbal fight.**

Avoiding Plagiarism

Understand the concept of intellectual property

**Avoid taking someone else's information
and pretending it is your material**

3-Steps to Avoid Plagiarism:

- 1. Keep record of all sources used**
- 2. Paraphrase or direct quote...
either way footnote**
- 3. Be careful to use direct quotes and
paraphrases as you write your paper**

Inquiries

- 1. Buying of term papers from the Internet for a class**
- 2. Canada proposed color pictures of diseased hearts be printed on cigarette packs; tobacco companies said that it was unethical**
- 3. Man arrested for hiring a prostitute; his car was impounded...however, his wife's name was on the title also.**



Chapter Two

The Role of the Majority View



**Does the majority rule
when it comes
to morality and ethics?**

**How do we decide upon an ethical issue?
We are already overwhelmed
by stats on the news or in the papers.**

**Does a majority vote indicate that all of the
majority know anything
about that particular issue?**

Think about politics. Hmmm.

**Another issue is that not all of the majority
would know the quality of a particular issue...
beyond its basic knowledge.**

**Also, there would be a discrepancy
of the judgment on the particular issue.**

**There can be emotional responses to some issues
from different sexes, races, religions, etc.**

Is it wrong to kill enemy civilians in a time of war?



How would this question be seen
as an ethical issue?

The Majority Can Err

**Look at nearly any political issue
in America or anywhere else,
the majority can be wrong ethically.**

**Slavery, women's rights, Vietnam War,
healthcare, gay rights/marriage, etc.
are all examples.**

Inquiries

- 1. With the beginning of WWII, FDR interned Japanese-Americans citizens.**
- 2. 79% of Americans viewed Lt. Calley's verdict as wrong.**
- 3. Discrimination against Jews in Europe was accepted as ethically correct...up to and including WWII.**

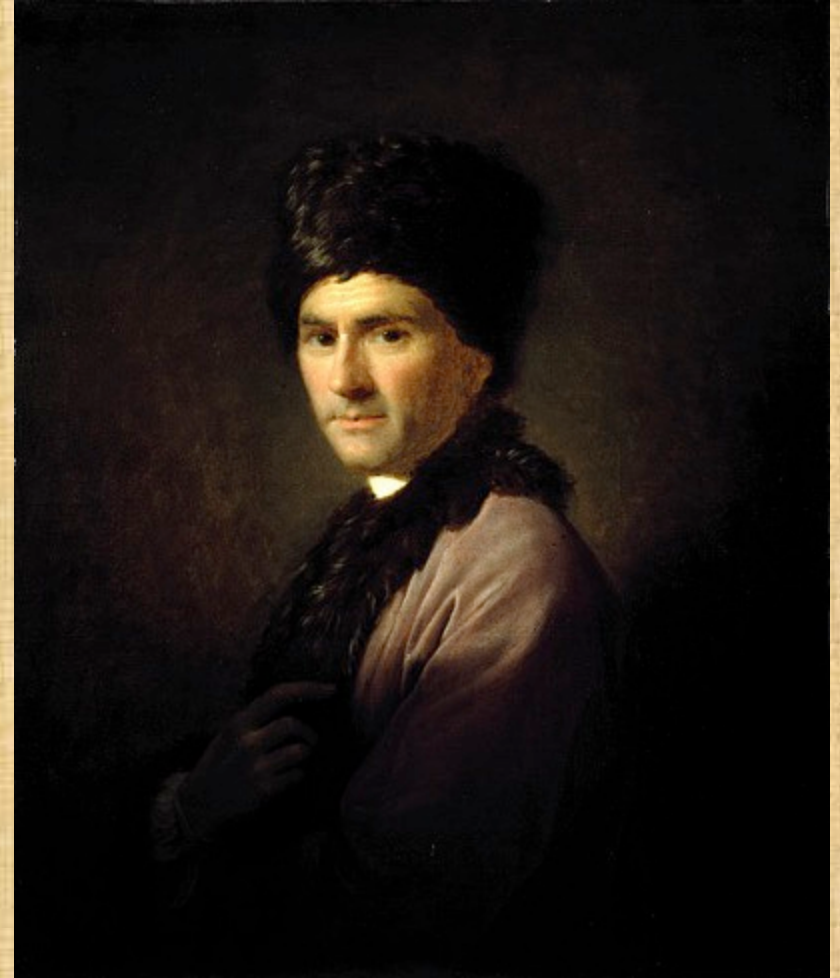


Chapter Three

The Role of Feelings

How Feelings Came to be Emphasized

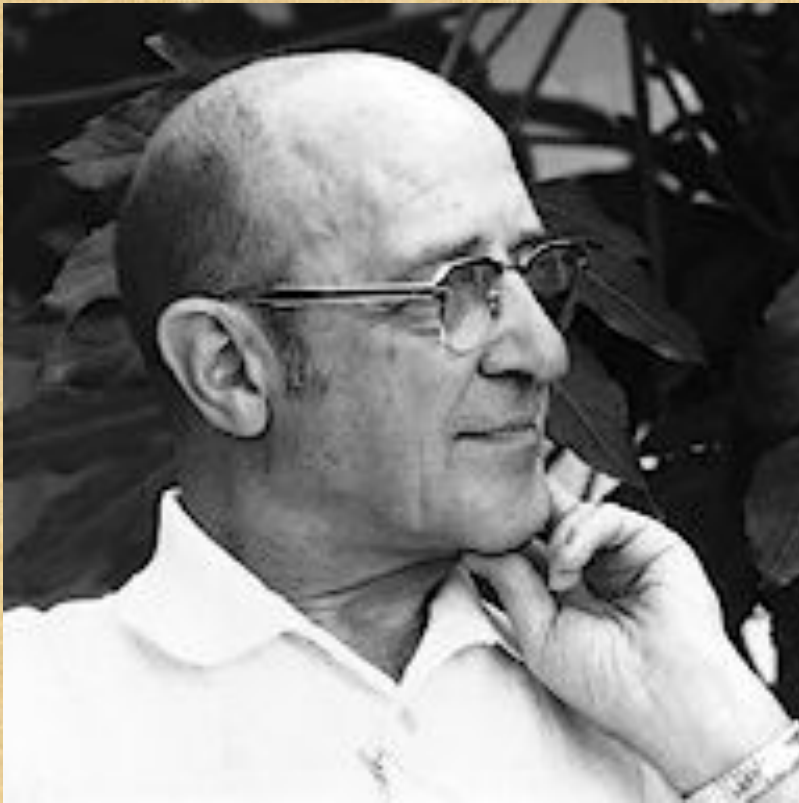
**Jean-Jacques Rousseau said,
“What I feel is right is right,
what I feel is wrong is wrong.”**



How feelings Came to be Emphasized

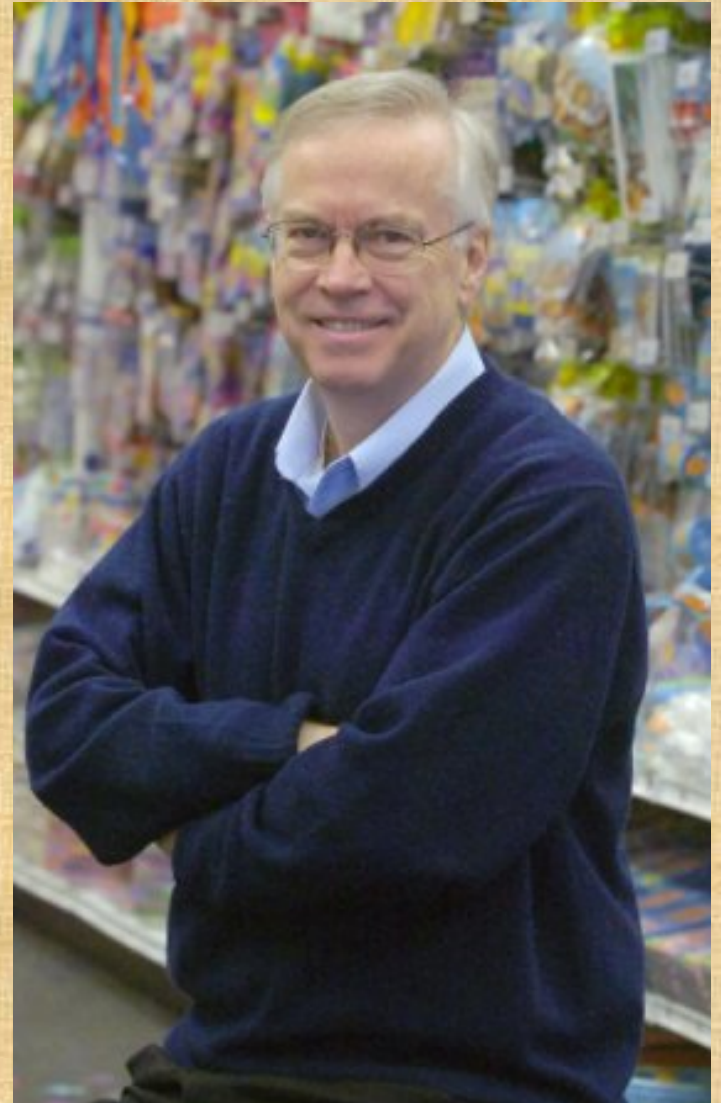
**Values clarification states that ethics
isn't a universal set of values.**

How feelings Came to be Emphasized

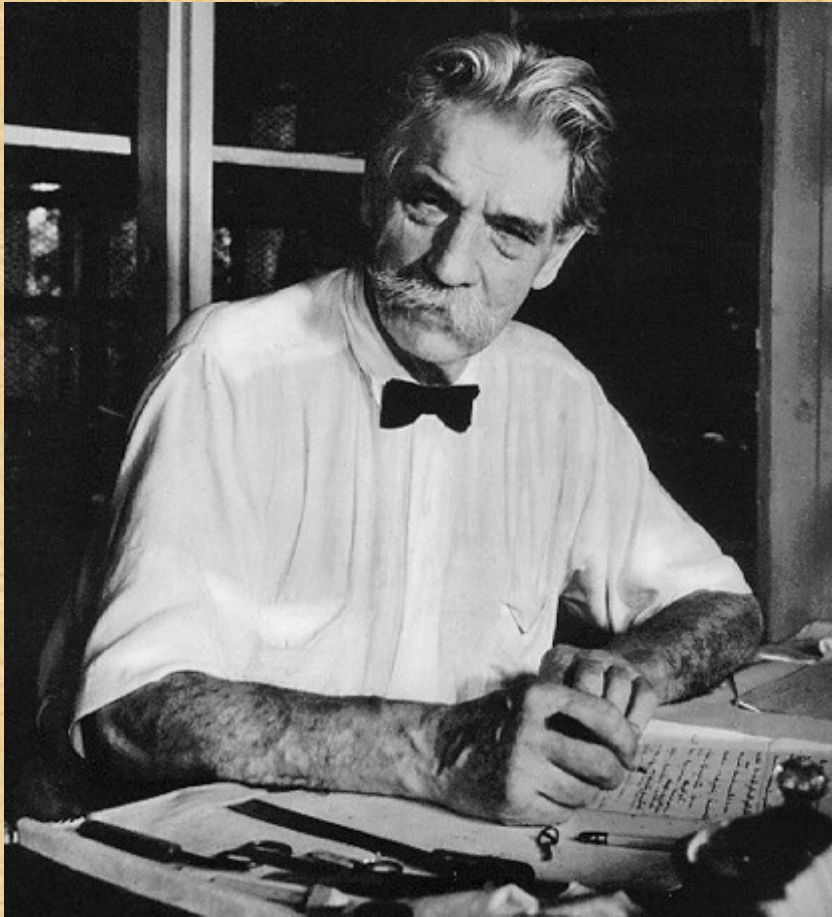


**Carl Rogers pushed
feeling right is doing right.**

**William Doherty said,
“It is time for
psychotherapists to stop
trying to talk people out of
their moral sense...
I don’t believe that all moral
beliefs are created equal.”**



Are Feelings reliable?



**Albert Schweitzer's feeling
of reverence of life**



**Martin Luther King
cared about the feelings
of minorities and those
who were hurting.**

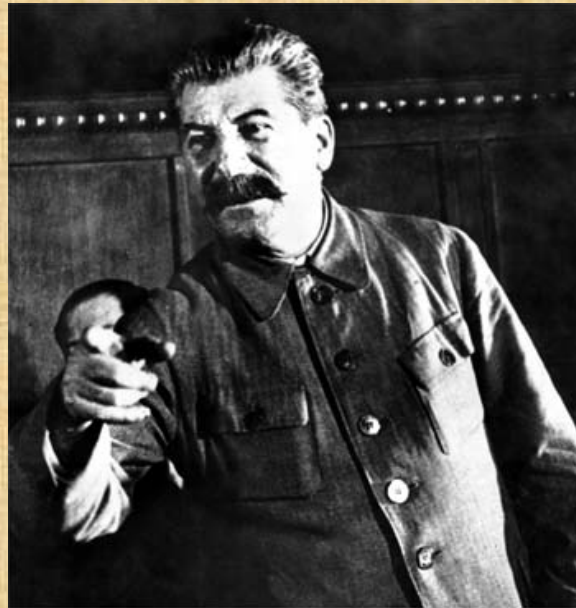
**Mother Teresa had feelings
for the poor and the sick
in Indian cities.**





Oseola McCarty was a poor clothes washer and ironer who gave \$150,000 scholarship to needy who went to USM.

**And now for the opposite side of good feelings....
These three also had feelings.**



A Better Guide is Needed

The author's story of the boy overturning cones....

Feelings aren't universally good.

Inquiries

- 1. Restaurant owner prefers not so deal with minorities as customers. She feels that since she started her business, she can serve who she wishes.**
- 2. A newspaper writer signs a contract and then is offered more money at another paper and breaks her contract.**



Chapter Four

The Role of Conscience

**“If feelings are no better a guide than
the majority view, is the basis of morality
each person’s own conscience?
How trustworthy is conscience?”**

Conscience and Shame



**Shame moves you
off dead-center
to an apology
due to conscience...
in some cases.**

**The text talked
about young children
as an example.**

Individual Differences

How do you account for differences?

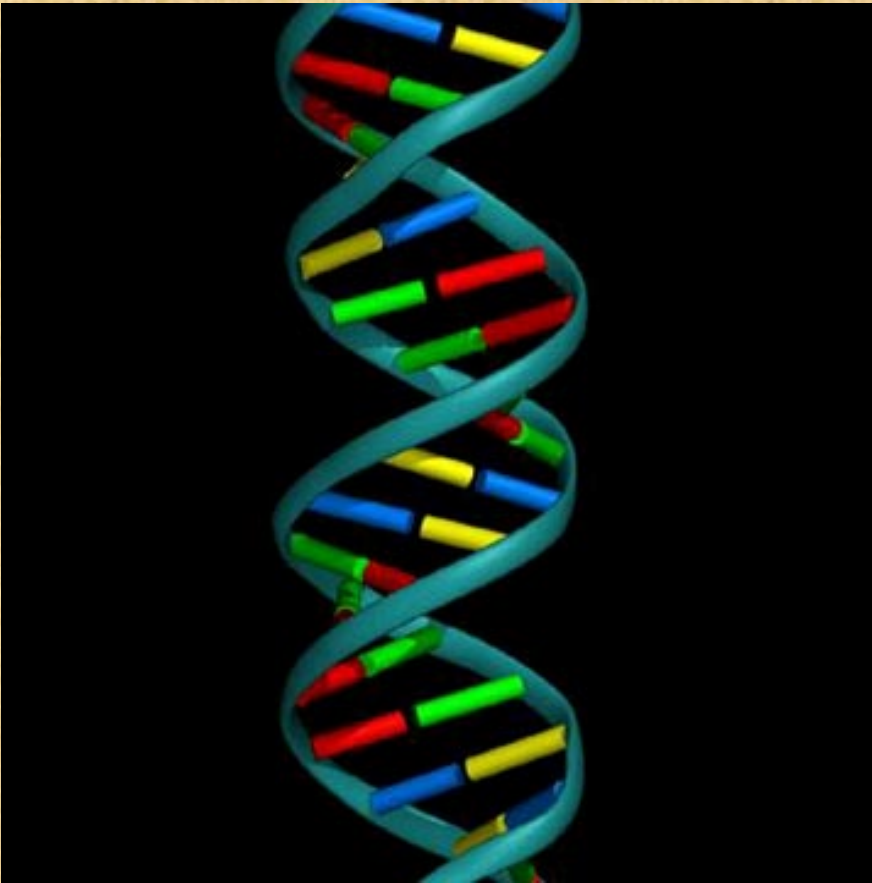
Why are people so different when it comes to conscience and shame or lack thereof?

The Shapers of Conscience

There are three shapers of the individual's conscience:

- 1. Natural Endowment**
- 2. Social Conditioning**
- 3. Moral Choice**

Natural Endowment



**It is in the genes....
it is something
that we obtain at birth.**

Social Conditioning



We develop social conditioning within the world we live....

It starts with our parents soon after birth and is with us throughout life.

For example: the threaded discussion about rap music.

Moral Choice



**We have to capacity to
make a choice based
upon our own viewpoint
or need.**

**The example of the
detective who changes a
detail in a rape case...
to improve his case.**

A Balanced View of Conscience

We should use our conscience as a guide but not do so without thinking.

The text illustrated this with the boy getting cigarettes for his mother of weapons for a tyrant.



Inquiries

**There are many examples, but think
about the cancer cure issue.**



Chapter Five

Comparing Cultures



We are slowly getting more culturally in tune with the pluralism of the world in large part due to the Internet.

We understand multiculturalism as a concept, but we need to be careful applying it to ethics.

Differences Among Cultures

We need to see how ethics change from one culture/society to another.

The text talks about the differences between cultures when it comes to sex before marriage, homosexuality, etc.



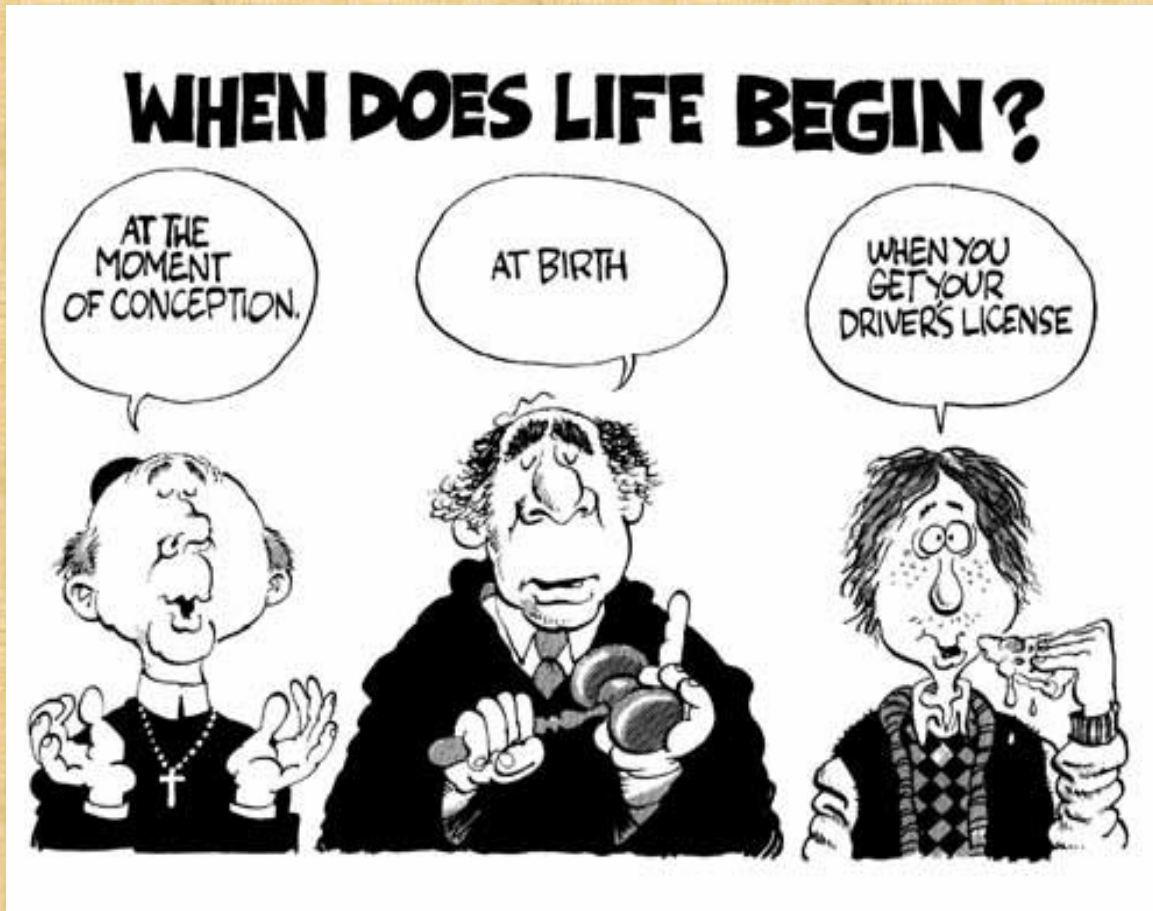
Interpreting the Differences

**This raises the issue of cultural relativity,
which raise many other questions.**

The Similarity of Values

There are many parallels or similarities of values across cultural and/or religious differences.

Is Judgment Appropriate?



The text shows a difference in ethics about abortion. The US position and that of the German attitude.

This raises all sorts of issues....



**In addition, we, as humans, aren't absolutely correct all the time....
That raises some major ethical issues for us.**

Three Important Cautions

- 1. Understanding is no substitute for moral judgment.**
- 2. The essential moral quality of an action does not change from time to time or place to place.**
- 3. Culpability for immoral act may vary widely.**

Inquiries

- 1. Chinese woman had a delivered a little girl, which upset her husband and resulted in mistreatment of the wife and possible mistreatment of the infant.**





Chapter Six

A Foundation for Judgment



There is a problem when we allow either the individual or social unchecked moral reasoning....

Therefore, something else needs to be used.

Assessing *Ought* Statements

Check out the long lists of ancient *oughts* (p. 67)

Here are several samples:

**“Love thy wife studiously. Gladden her heart
all thy life long.”**

“Death is to be chosen before slavery and base deeds.”

“I sought no trickery, nor swore false oaths.”

Governmental *Oughts*



The Declaration of Independence starts off with a long list of moral oughts: “all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

Organizational *Oughts*

The list of organizations have codes of ethics like the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, the American Institute of Chemists, the AMA, etc.

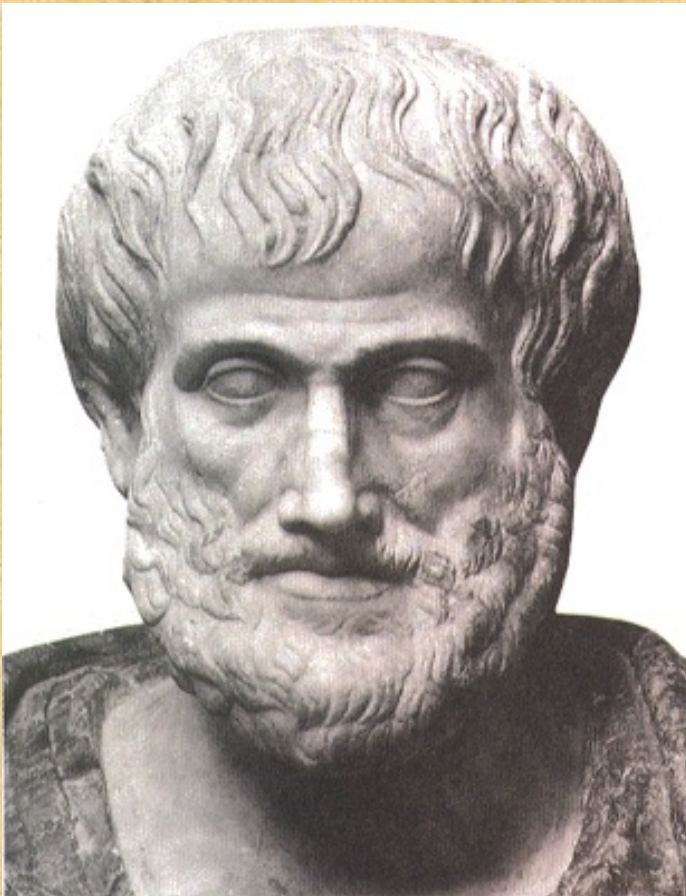
Well, they all have them except the American Philosophical Association. Duh.

Our Own Everyday *Oughts*

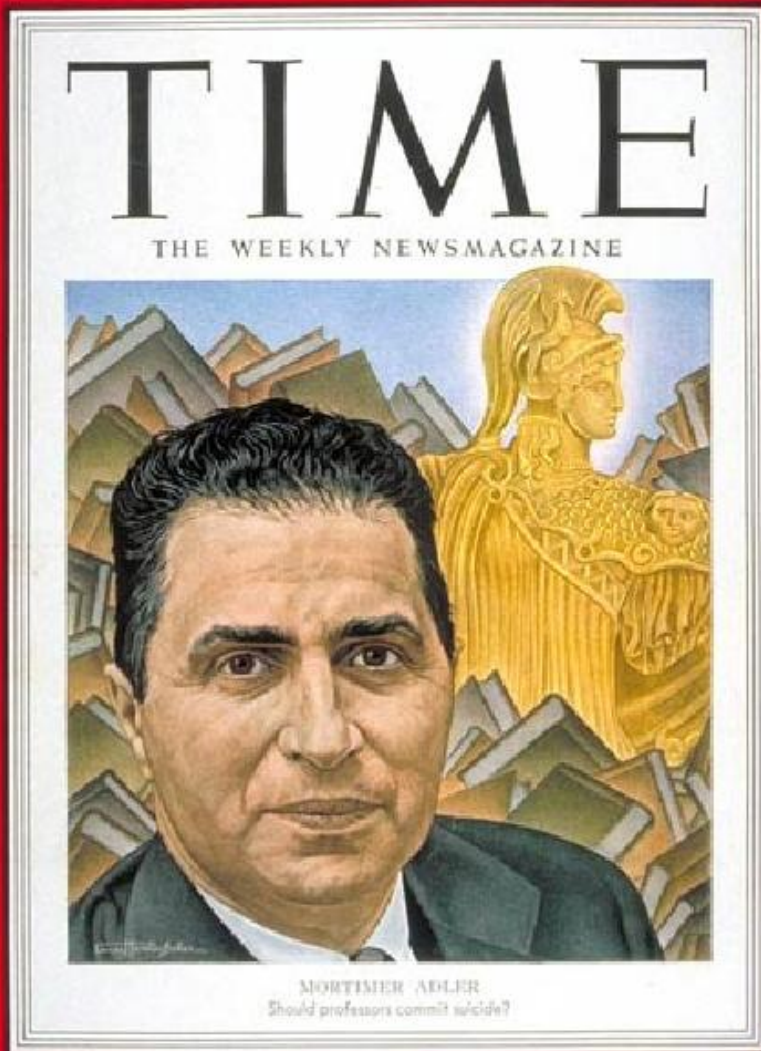
We hear about normal, mundane examples of the *oughts* and *ought* not to do of life: killings, rapes, divorces, etc.

We can say that is not what someone *ought* to do, etc. The issue is the means in which we can devise a means to do so.

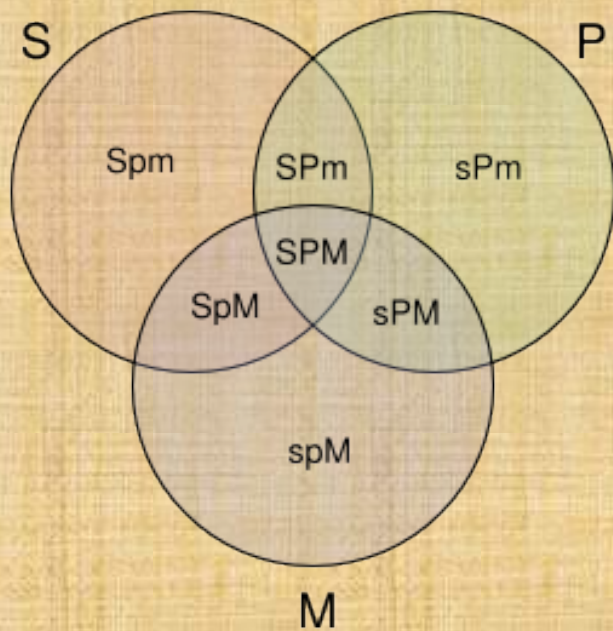
The Principle of Right Desire



“Aristotle noted that although prescriptive (ought) statements cannot be tested for their correspondence with reality, they can be tested for *conformity with right desire*... We ought to desire what is really good for us and nothing else.”



Adler’s issue is “to say that we ought not desire what is really good for us or that we ought to desire what is really bad for us would be illogical.”



**Major premise: All M are P.
Minor premise: All S are M.**

Conclusion: All S are P.

This is Adler's syllogism to explain it:

We ought to desire what is really good for us.

Knowledge is really good for us.

Therefore, we ought to desire knowledge.



The text also uses a syllogism about Darwin's missing link and smoking's missing link to causing cancer.

The Principle of Contradiction



The issue of *in vitro* fertilization melted into testing embryos for other issues but including pregnancy.

Clinton, the *Washington Post*, Ramsey Colloquium, etc. were against it.

The principle of contradiction:

*An idea cannot be both true and false
at the same time in the same way.*

Challenges to Judgment



The text talked about Greek sailors navigating between two deadly dangers: Scylla, a sea monster and Charybdis, a whirlpool.

Challenges to Judgment



SHARKS; Dogs of Scylla -
BRITANNIA between **SCYLLA** & **CHARYBDIS**.
or - The Vigil of the Constitution, steered clear of the Rock of Democracy, and the Whirlpool of Arbitrary Power.

**A British
version
of doing
the same
thing....**

Challenges to Judgment

The issue is in ethics sailing between the two extremes of relativism and absolutism.

Relativists believe that right/wrong or good/evil don't exist. Therefore, we can't get to a moral basis in any decision.

Absolutists believe that circumstances aren't important...just the law.

Inquiries

1. What are some other *oughts* in your life?
2. Can you kill endangered animals?
3. Is it morally or ethically correct to be a spy?





Chapter Seven

The Basic Criteria

A Fundamental Good: Respect for Persons

There are a number of givens that have value.

Things like knowledge and respect for a person.

**All religions and many philosophers
and writers have similar attitudes
toward the value of respecting others.**

Three Basic Criteria

- 1. Obligations**
- 2. Moral Ideals**
- 3. Consequences**

Obligations

**There are numerous forms of obligation...
formal, friendship, citizenship, business,
professional, etc.**

Moral Ideals

**Moral ideals are like the cardinal virtues
developed in Greece millennia ago.**

**Cardinal comes from the Latin word *hinge*.
Our own personal moral lives *hinge* on
our moral ideals.**



**This hinge issue does some strange things
sometimes like putting an old person
into an igloo to die when the person
can't function in society.**

Consequences

Consequences occur as a result of our functioning in the world based upon ethics.

There is a very broad array of what consequences look like, when they occur, whether they are positive or negative.

Analyzing Ethical Issues

- 1. Step 1: Study the Details of the Case**
- 2. Step 2: Identify the Relevant Criteria**
- 3. Step 3: Determine Possible Courses of Action**
- 4. Step 4: Decide Which Action is Most Ethical**

The Case of Professor Woebegone

**How should one decide this case
of the failing math student?**

- 1. Step 1: Study the Details of the Case**
- 2. Step 2: Identify the Relevant Criteria**
- 3. Step 3: Determine Possible Courses of Action**
- 4. Step 4: Decide Which Action is Most Ethical**

Inquiries

- 1. What are some other *oughts* in your life?**
- 2. Can you kill endangered animals?**
- 3. Is it morally/ethically correct to be a spy?**



Chapter Eight

Considering Obligations



**In situations with conflicting obligations/
responsibilities,
how do you deal with the conflict?**

A list of possible obligations:

- 1. Friendship**
- 2. Citizenship**
- 3. Employment**
- 4. Professional**

When Obligations Conflict—some situations

- 1. Cutbacks or organizational restructuring**
- 2. Conflict between customers/employees**
- 3. Letters of reference**
- 4. Assistance of people in trouble**

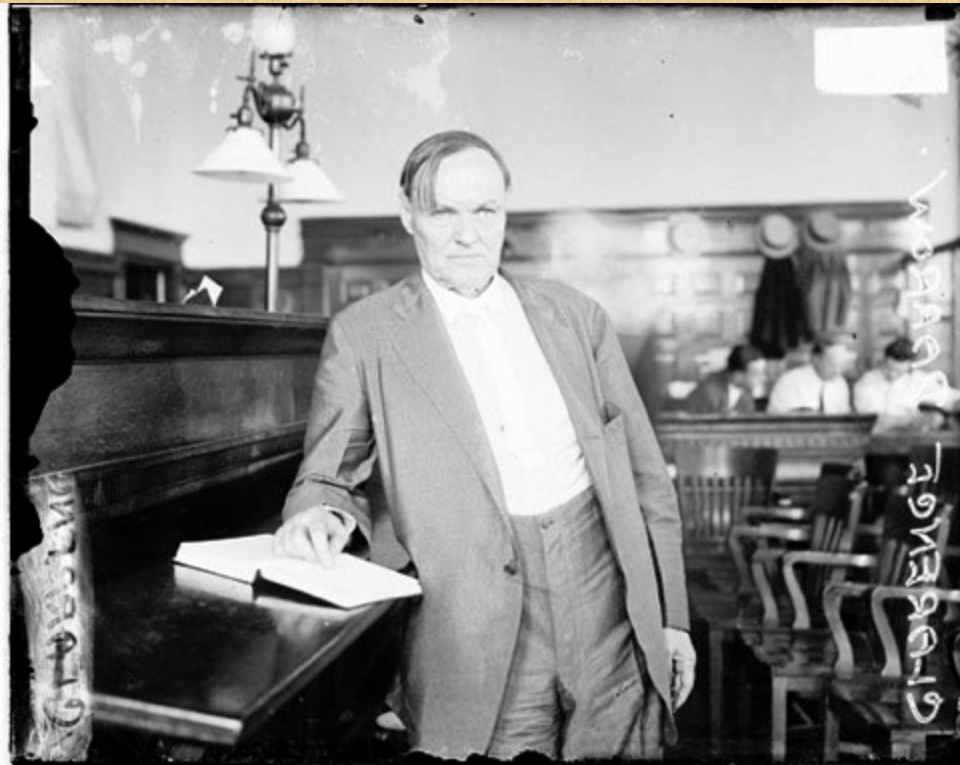
Weighing the Obligations—the how to

- 1. Decide upon the one that is most important, which is often debatable**
- 2. Nevertheless, attempt at the most important obligation**

Weighing the Obligations—*the how to*

- 1. Decide upon the one that is most important,
which is often debatable**
- 2. Nevertheless, attempt at the most important
obligation**

Two Moral Dilemmas



**The Clarence Darrow Effect.
Was is ethical?**



**Attorney Martin Erdmann's case
of defending the group or defending
his profession and society....**

The Alabama Syphilis Case **also called the Tuskegee Experiment test**



This was a test to determine the medical results of syphilis on a patient.

The state used 600 black men and 1/3 never developed syphilis, 1/3 got arsenic-mercury treatment, 1/3 got no medication.

Forgotten obligations:

- 1. Physician's care of patients**
- 2. Obligation of justice**
- 3. Saw the men as subjects**
- 4. Crimes against humanity issue**
- 5. Racial issue...not mentioned but still there**

Inquiries:

- 1. Financial backers of terrorism post 9/11**
- 2. Warren Buffett's will for his children**
- 3. Inquiries to deciding the moral/ethical**
- 4. Catholic priest is in conflict with the church's position.**
- 5. A Protestant professor doesn't believe in literal interpretation of Scriptures**



Chapter Nine

Considering Moral Ideals



**How can we reconcile conflicts
between moral ideals and
between a moral ideal and an obligation?**

**Definition of the word, ideal, in the present context:
Ideal = unrealistic**

**However, in ethics, it means that we blur or blend
obligation and ideal**

Important Moral Ideals

The text notes the parallel or synonym between virtue and moral ideal.

Cardinal Virtues:

- 1. Prudence—practical wisdom**
- 2. Justice—without prejudice or equality**
- 3. Temperance—self-mastery of desires, etc.**
- 4. Courage—moral as well as physical**
- 5. Loving Kindness—doing to others what you wish done to you**

- 6. Honesty—Latin for honorable**
- 7. Compassion—empathy or understanding**
- 8. Forgiveness—willingness to forgive and move on**
- 9. Repentance—an apology**
- 10. Reparation—some means of amends-making**
- 11. Gratitude—expression of thanks**
- 12. Beneficence—*random acts of kindness***

Ideals in Conflict

Ideals can be in conflict with other conflicts.

The text's example of a boy in a bus being picked upon when a girl wants to intervene.

The conflict comes between helping the boy and avoiding alienation from her peers.

This raises the issue of the greater good or the lesser evil

The Munich Incident



During the Olympics in Munich, some terrorists detained some Israeli athletes.

This raises issues about what steps are desirable.

The Issue of Affirmative Action

This is a hot-button issue since there is a conflict between being fair and attempting to resolve long-term issues.

Ideals Versus Obligations

The doctor who gives a placebo to a hypochondriac or takes a weapon from a conflict, there is a conflict of ideals over obligation.

Again, it is a case of the greater good over the lesser good...whether with ideals or obligations.

Inquiries

- 1. Philip Morris and the contributions to museums, theaters, etc.**
- 2. Undercover cops attends college and checks on drug use.**
- 3. Son of an alleged businessman is really a mobster. What does the son do?**
- 4. Planes crashes in the Andes and survivors ate the flesh of the dead.**



Chapter Ten

Considering Consequences

**This unit deals with cause and effect.
The question is how we deal with cause and effect.**

Dealing with Probability

This is a unpredictable responses issue. The text used an illustration of a little girl taken away from her parents and raised in foster care until she was 9.

What are the child's and foster care parents responses?

Making the Analysis Thorough

We can either make superficial decisions or self-centered or self-serving decisions.

The text talked about a student who stole things to get through college.

Visualize the actions taken and ask probing questions to avoid mistakes.

Three Difficult Questions

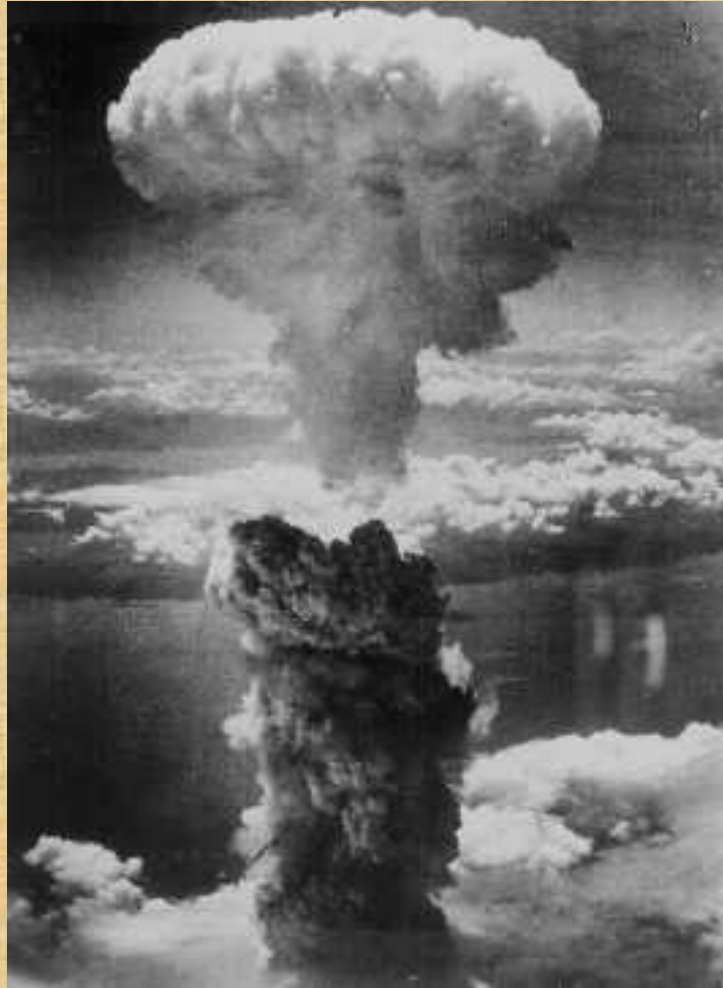
- 1. Is it justifiable to perform an evil act in order to achieve good consequences?**

Can we experiment on people knowing that it can cause other major problems—even if there are benefits in the long-run?

- 2. Is it justifiable to perform an act that is not in itself evil but produces mixed consequences, some of them beneficial and others harmful?**

The principle of the double effect comes into play.

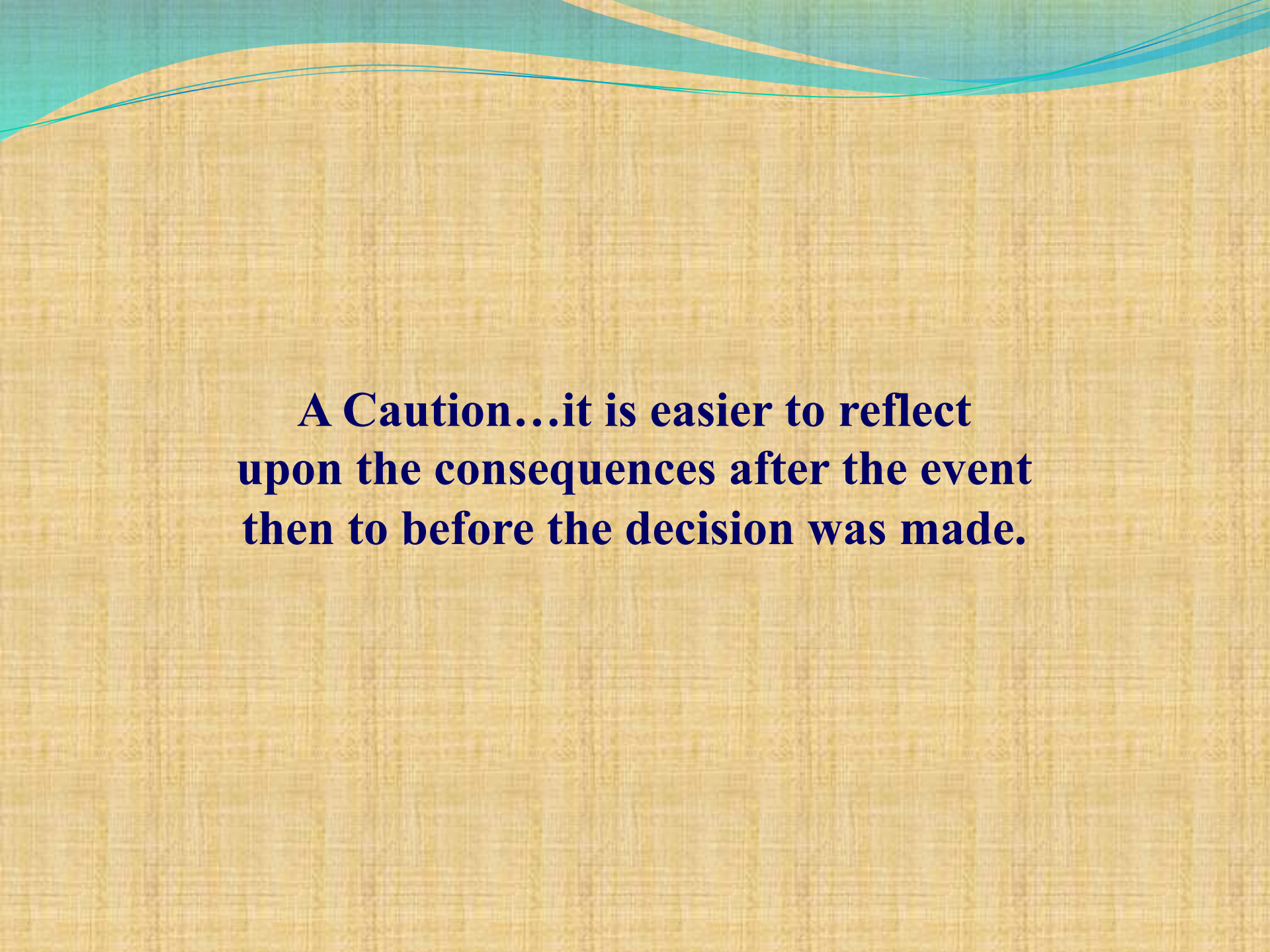
- 1. Is the good inseparable from the bad?**
- 2. Do the good outweigh the bad?**
- 3. Don't intentionally create bad consequences.**



3. When only two actions are possible and both produce good consequences, which should be chosen?

The text wrote about WWII and the battle injuries vs. gonorrhoea. Who was treated first?

Or the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



**A Caution...it is easier to reflect
upon the consequences after the event
then to before the decision was made.**

Dealing with Dilemmas



This is a reality in both the real world and in the classroom.

Often, it gets down to choosing the lesser of two evils.

Inquiries

- 1. What happens when a rap group sings about assaulting a women? Or how does an x-rated film affect society?**
- 2. What if a teacher grades on a curve, and there is cheating? What if a teacher doesn't grade on a curve and there is cheating?**



Chapter Eleven

Determining Moral Responsibility



**How do we determine
whether a person is responsible
for her or his immoral actions?
Are there degrees of responsibility?**

How Free Are Our Choices?

This raises critical issues regarding control.

How much free will do we possess?

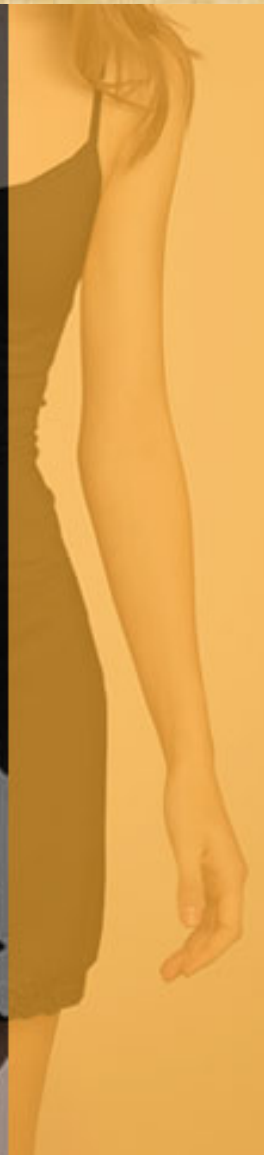
Right brain/left brain, birth order, sex, ethnic background, etc. all affect the decision-making process.

Determining Moral Responsibility

Dealing with culpability....Latin for *fault*

**If we are aware that an action is wrong
and freely choose to do it anyway,
we are fully culpable for the action.**

**Example, the psychologist having sex with a client...
he is both immoral and culpable.**



**If through no fault of our own
we are unaware that an action is wrong
when we perform it,
we are not morally culpable.**

**Example, the neurotic woman and the bartender...
he was morally wrong but not culpable.**



If some person or circumstance forces us to do something wrong against our will, we are not morally culpable.

Example, the POW tortured...he didn't act freely.



**If we lack the mental capacity to determine
that an action is wrong at the time
we perform it, we are not morally culpable.**

**Example, little children seeing something on TV
and doing the same thing
or Hitler killing millions.**



Heroism Not Required

**Jagerstatter's refusal
to be drafted and executed
for it.**

**And the other locals didn't
realize their signing up
was forced upon them.**



Inquiries

- 1. Man and woman walking across a track, she catches her foot on the track. He attempts to free her and fails. He jumps for safety and she dies. Is he moral?**



Chapter Twelve

A Perspective on History

The Classical Period—500 BC to 500 AD

**During this time period,
there was a shift in politics
from monarchy to industrial democracy.**

**Hence the ethical/moral agenda changed and
was refocused to the individual.**

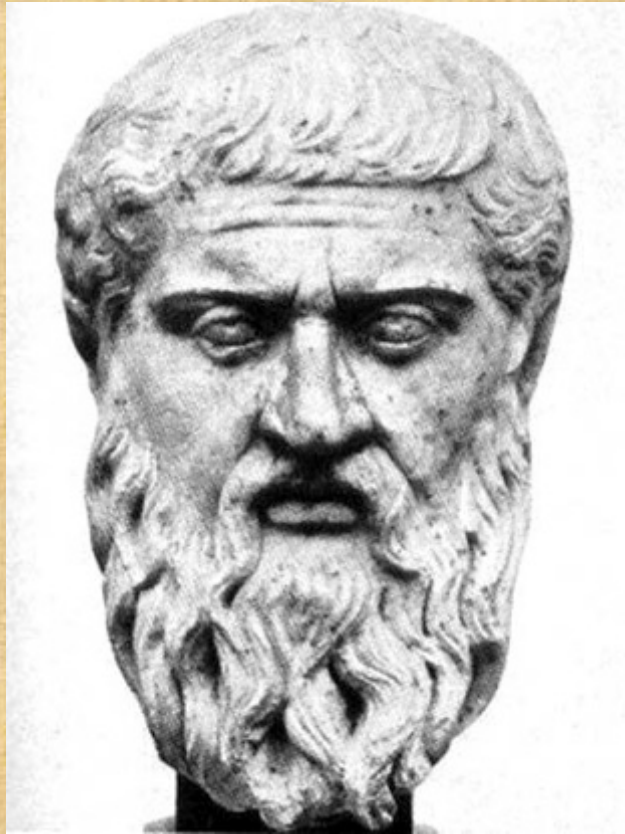
**Socrates, 469-399 BC, was the father
of philosophy/ethics.**



**He did not accept that tradition allows
for conduct being permissible. He expanded
personal choice to a universal set of ethical principles.**

“The unexamined life is not worth living.”

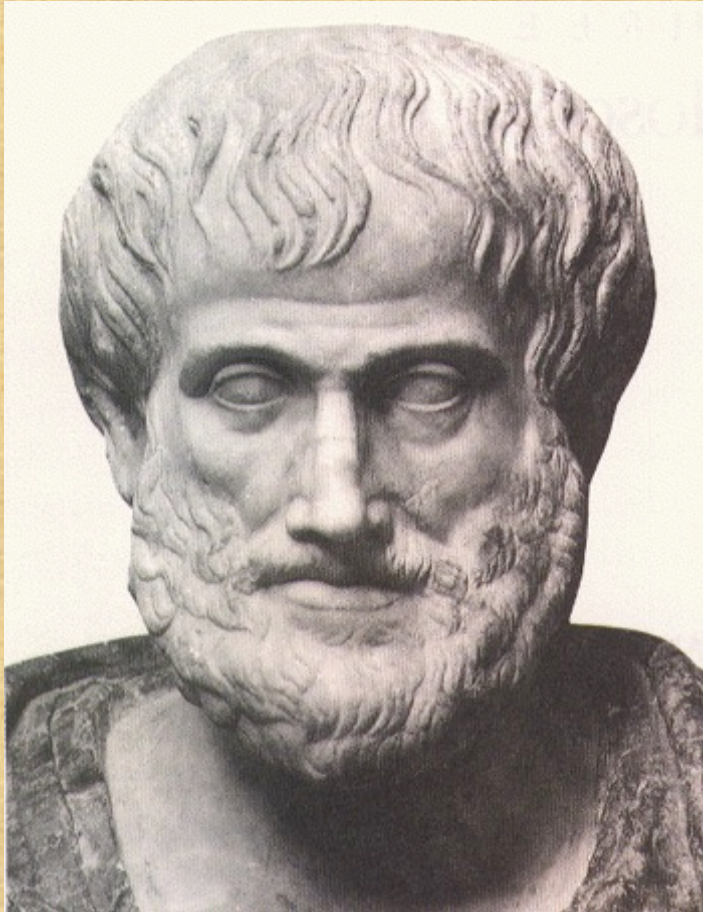
Ask the probing question....



Plato, 427-347 BC, was a student of Socrates...even though they disagreed on pleasures, etc.

Plato saw life as a reflection of cosmic forms and his goal was to understand the Good.

***The Republic* was his great work.**



**Aristotle, 384-322 BC,
was a student of Plato
and disagreed with Plato
and linked-up with Socrates.
He wrote *Nicomachean
Ethics*.**

Aristotle, 384-322 BC, was a student of Plato and disagreed with Plato and linked up with Socrates. He wrote *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Actualizing ones potential of each of us and going down the *via media* were his goals.

The Medieval Period, 500-1500, this was a time in Europe when Christianity blended with the classical period...reason with religion.

St. Augustine (354-430) mixed Plato and Christianity.

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) resurrected Aristotle and mixed it with Christianity.

**St. Thomas had two types of ethics:
Natural Law and Theological Ethics/Law.**

The Modern Period, 1500-to the present, was ushered in by the Protestant Reformation, which pushed individual to think independently of the RCC.

In the scientific world, the same challenges were made by Copernicus, Galileo, Harvey, etc.

Hobbes, 1588-1679, wrote *Leviathan*, which dealt with mechanistic materialism and ethics. What was right and/or wrong came about when societies/civilizations became operational.

However, even then an individual can't trust all to obey something like the Golden Rule... therefore, we need governments.

**Hume, 1711-1766, and Locke, 1632-1704, based
their ethics upon pleasure
being the measure of moral/ethical judgment.**

**Hume mixed reason with moral sentiment
in his ethical system.**

The Ethics of Duty or Deontology

Kant, 1724-1804, wrote *The Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*.

He rejects everything that isn't based upon reason.

Morality/ethics are tied to *duty*.

“Always treat every human being, including yourself, as an end in himself and never merely as a means to an end.”

The Ethics of Consequence or Teleology

Mill, 1806-1873, along with Bentham came up with utilitarianism, which bases good or evil upon the consequences of the action.

**“Utility, or the Greatest Happiness Principle”
is what all ethics stand upon.**