

Runaway jury ethics paper assignment

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Virtuous Revenge? The movie defines the trail that Jury will sit in on. A man walks into a New Orleans brokerage firm and opens fire on everyone inside. He kills one of the higher-ranking employs, Jacob Woods. The movie then immediately jumps two years ahead in time. We meet Nicholas Easter, played by John Sack. He opens a letter to find out he has been summoned for Jury Duty. The case is none other than Celeste Woods, the woman whose husband had been shot two years prior, vs.. Vicksburg Firearms, the company that allowed the gun to get into the killers hands.

As Nick is walking away from his mailbox, someone is taking pictures of him. This is where the main ethical dilemma is revealed. Rankin Fitch, played by Gene Hickman, has already begun to gather information on all the possible Jurors that could work the trail. He plans on getting the Jurors that would vote for his client, Vicksburg Firearms. Wendell Roar, the attorney that represents Celeste, also decides to hire a Jury consultant like Fitch. He chooses a man that came down from Philadelphia, named Lawrence, to do the job. In the midst of the movie unfolding, we also find out that Nick has been chosen as Juror #9.

When Nick arrives home later that night, He greets Marble, and we learn that they are trying to sway the Jury as well. They are trying to make money by selling the Jurors votes to the highest paying side. There are 3 different sides working this trail, each wanting to win for their own reasons. Is this idea of swaying a Jury ethical? The three theories of ethical behavior that most apply to this movie are Rights Theory, Utilitarianism, and Justice and Fairness. I will apply these separate theories to try and answer this question. The first theory I want to take a look at is Justice and Fairness.

The whole trial is about whether Mrs.. Woods deserved to be compensated for her husband's death. She was taking on a Gun manufacturer, not the specific person that shot her husband. Her attorney claimed that Vicksburg Firearms weren't checking store sells. Therefore allowing people to buy as many guns as they wanted. They claimed people were buying these guns in large amounts, to sell on the black market. Of course, Vicksburg attorneys argued that the company had been checking up on different sales. They argued the fact that it wasn't there fault her husband was injured.

They also argued the fact that the shooter was the real cause and was dead. So the question, in regards to whether Mrs.. Woods deserved the money or not, can actually be found by looking at compensatory Justice. If Vicksburg Firearms was negligent to where their guns were being sold, then it might be their fault that the gunman was able to acquire a gun. This is the reason that Finch was hired. The company knew that there was a slight chance they could lose and have their reputation, and money, deteriorate. Is this any reason that a Jury should be looked at as votes? Is it something that can be bought or manipulated to go a certain way?

The answer is no. Rails theory of fairness pulls many different approaches of Justice into two principals. The first principle, the principle of equal liberty, is the greater of the two. It states that liberties must be protected from invasion of others and must be equal to those of others. This simply means that everyone deserves equal treatment. So the Jury should be protected from outside, and inside, invasion. Therefore they are tightly linked to duties. That is why I am going to look at rights theory next. Rights theory defined is an individual's entitlement to do something.

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Moral rights and Legal rights are different, but when trying to swing the Juror votes, both are violated. Using the legal rights system, it permits a person to act a certain way. That is why the Jurors are allowed to Judge whether someone is guilty or innocent. Moral Rights are entitlements based on moral standards independent of a legal system. That is why someone trying to swing the vote is wrong. These people are independent of the legal system but still feel that they can control others rights. An easier way to look at it is; if I have a right to do something, others have a duty to not interfere with that right.

Because these Jurors are fulfilling a legal right and their moral rights are being jeopardized, both of their rights are being infringed upon. Moral rights, in particular, provide individuals with equality and autonomy. One cannot subject others to their wishes. Finch does not do this subtly. He gives many of the Jurors' ultimatums by digging up dirt in their past, and also causing problems. Two of these situations stood out very clear to me. The first was when Finch's henchman told Kick that he knew about her abortion. That he knew the baby wasn't her husband's and if she didn't vote his way, her husband would find out.

The next situation was when Finch set Mill's husband up to get arrested. Mill was told that if she didn't vote for Vicksburg, her husband wouldn't be released. These tactics are morally and legally wrong. The last topic I want to look at is Utilitarianism. This is just selecting the best course of action that has the most beneficial consequences for society. Some would argue that this is the only way a verdict could be swung. If someone from the inside or

outside could sway the verdict so that the most positive, or least negative, outcome could happen, it would be all right.

This is where I want to take a look at Nick. He is a juror on the case and has his own agenda. He plays both sides but his intentions are made clear at the very end of the movie. Nick had been in Middle school when someone came in and shot up the school. He wasn't able to save Marbles' twin sister and always thought it was his fault. When the town he was from tried to sue the gun manufacturer, they lost and went bankrupt. Finch was the Jury Consultant for the gun company. Nick worked with Marble on this trial and they were able to swing the votes away from Finch.