

Ethics - should heinz steal

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Philosophy 31st Jan., Ethics- Should Heinz Steal In this case study, Heinz did the right thing by breaking into the druggist's store and stealing the drug to save his dying wife. Heinz's action in this case can be justified morally on two grounds: the utilitarian ground, and the Kantian deontological ground. The following is the moral justification of Heinz's action in light of the two theories of ethics.

To begin with, let us look at the justification of Heinz's action in light of the utilitarian moral theory. Before we give moral justification of the Heinz's decision in this case in light of the utilitarian theory of ethics, it is important to first look at the main moral principle that guide decision making in the utilitarian theory of ethics. According to the utilitarian theory of ethics, the guiding principle in making moral judgements and moral decisions is to always choose the action that maximizes the happiness for the majority of people who will be affected by the moral decision; in other words, the utilitarian theory of ethics hold that in making moral decisions, we should always choose the action that will result in the highest good for the majority of people (Singer, 14). This means that, in judging the morality of Heinz's action in light of the utilitarian theory of ethics, we should ask ourselves whether or not Heinz's action will result in the highest good for the majority of people.

A critical analysis of Heinz's action in this case study shows that Heinz's action will inevitably result in the highest good for the majority of people. This is because the healing of Heinz's wife will make Heinz's family members and friends happier, than would the \$2000 that the druggist would earn from the drug that Heinz stole from him, make the druggist family members and friends happy. Given that there was no other available drug that could heal

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Heinz's wife from the lethal cancer, and also, given the fact that Heinz had exhausted all the available means to raise the \$2000 required for the radium drug, Heinz's action of breaking into the druggist's store and stealing the drug so as to save his wife is morally justifiable on the utilitarian ground. Heinz's action of stealing the drug from the druggist is also morally justifiable under the Kantian Deontology. According to Kantian categorical imperative, which is the Kantian moral principle guiding moral decisions, in making moral decisions, we should always choose the moral action that we should at the same time wish to be made into a universal law (Kant, 18). In other words, Kantian Categorical imperative states that, in making moral decisions, we should choose the actions that we would be willing and happy to see them applied universally to all identical or similar cases. A critical look of Heinz's action in light of the Kantian categorical imperative shows that Heinz's action is, indeed, morally justifiable.

Given the circumstances under which Heinz chose to steal the drug from the druggist's store, one can wish Heinz's action to be applied universally to all similar cases; in other words, one can wish that in cases whereby a person's life is in danger due to a curable decease, but the drug needed to cure the decease is rare and expensive, far beyond the means of the patient's relatives, force should be applied to obtain the drug. Given the fact that there was no alternative cure available for Heinz's wife, and given the fact that Heinz had in vain did all he could to raise the \$2000 needed for the drug, Heinz's action of stealing the drug is reasonable and perfectly in line with the Kantian Categorical imperative.

Works Cited

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