

# Stealing and ethics essay examples

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



Ethics is often a controversial topic for many to discuss. The reason being is because it includes the opinions that one has developed throughout their life. With that in mind, who is to say that one person's ethics are better than the others, when they are based on the opinions that each of us have developed through personal experience. That brings the conversation to the idea of stealing. Is stealing always wrong? Potentially. But when using Immanuel Kant's logic that the ends justify the means there are those who can justify their actions.

Stealing for selfish means is a horrible action. Those that burglarize cars or homes out of greed or jealousy for others possessions have no ability to justify their actions. They are flat out wrong and should be clearly punished for their actions. However, that form of stealing is not a part of this conversation. Instead, the ethics of stealing bring forth another question when used in this manner: are there situations in which a person can steal and not be considered a "bad" person? Is there ever a way to justify their actions of stealing? There are a number of different examples that can be used to explain when stealing can be a justifiable action.

Immanuel Kant is an important philosopher and religious personality who presented a stance that could be used to validate stealing. He is best known for his quote that the "ends justify the means." (Purtilo & Doherty, 2011). That statement affirms the idea that there are some reasons that can be used to explain away a person's actions, including stealing.

For example, imagine living in a third-world country that is wrought with poverty. Citizens in the United States often see homeless people throughout the streets of their major cities, however, the poverty in many of

these countries is exceedingly worse. In those situations, there is a potential that one can use Kant's theory to validate their option of stealing. Stealing to feed their family or find shelter are just two examples of how one could steal with a positive outcome in mind. What if they were stealing to protect loved ones? Or another example is the stealing to protect a country? All of these examples could be used to explain away the negative perception that is immediately applied to the concept of stealing. Another example is the stealing of information that is used within the practice of national safety. Some may consider this stealing as well, but it is easily understood that many people within the community would want to see this type of stealing completed to protect the innocent.

Immanuel Kant would agree with this stance. In each of these examples, the ends would always trump the means of stealing. Even though stealing is considered a negative action, using it in these methods would help obtain some type of positive position.

Another aspect of the conversation is to consider the emotions of those involved. The people who are using stealing to obtain "things" out of greed have emotions to consider as much as those that are stealing to protect or provide for their family. Stealing out of fear or the idea of necessity is completely different than stealing out of greed or simple want.

Ethics usually boil down to the opinions of those involved. Even the philosophers that shaped many aspects of popular thought had their own opinions on matters based on their life experiences. While we may think that stealing is flat out wrong, there are many people that use it to protect or

provide for themselves. Those individuals would be able to stand on Immanuel Kant's theory to justify their actions.

## **Resources**

Purtilo, R. B., Doherty, R. F. (2011). " Ethical dimensions in the health professions (5th edition)."

St. Louis, MO. Elsevier Saunders. Pg: 68-69.