

# Finnis's natural law theory

Law



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Basically, Finn's's natural law theory are divided into three main parts, each with its own purpose and function. According to Finnis, there are first, a set of notions that " indicate the basic forms of human flourishing as goods to be pursued and realized" and that every human beings should have the idea on how they should act. Secondly, Finnis further argued on the notion of " a set of basic methodological requirements of practical reasonableness ... Which distinguish sound from unsound practical thinking and . provide the criteria for distinguishing between [reasonable and unreasonable acts]. Thirdly, a methodological requirements that allows one to distinguish between acting morally right or morally wrong and " to formulate . . . a set of general moral standards".

### 1. First Main Part of Finnis Natural Law Theory : Basic Human Goods

Finn's' naturalism is both an ethical theory and a theory of law. Finnis introduced the theory of basic goods in human life as the first part of his natural law theory.

Based on the set of notions that, " indicate the basic forms of human flourishing as goods to be pursued and realized" which according to Finnis, every reasonable person would assent to the value of these basic goods as objects of human striving, and these basic goods are " indemonstrable but self-evident principles [that shape] our practical reasoning. " Finnis distinguishes a number of equally valuable basic goods namely, life, practical reasonableness, knowledge, play, friendship, religion, and aesthetic experience.

Finnis argues that the list of basic goods is exhaustive in that " other objectives and forms of good will be found ... to be ways or combinations of ways of pursuing .. and realizing ... one of the seven basic forms of good, or

some combination of them. " His argument basically means that in order to achieve the basic good, the elements of seven basic goods must be fulfilled. A person is said to have achieved basic goods even if he achieved either one of the basic forms or combinations of the basic forms, he doesn't need to pursue all of the seven basic goods at the same time.

Since the human basic goods do not provide any hierarchy between the seven forms, hence, the basic goods are incommensurable. According to Finnis, none of the basic goods " can be analytically reduced to being merely an aspect of any of the others, or to being merely instrumental in the pursuit of any of the others," and " each one, when we focus on it, can reasonably be regarded as the most important. In simple words, Finnis argues that, each of the forms of basic goods are to be distinguished from each other because each form has intrinsic values. 1. 1 .

Knowledge Stating that knowledge is good, or thinking of knowledge as a value, is not the same as saying that knowledge is a moral value. By saying "knowledge is to be pursued" since it is good and that goods are to be pursued" Finnis is not saying that a moral obligation has been created. Finnis's basic goods are to be thought of as intrinsically good in that all of these values should be considered good for their own sake and not for an instrumental purpose. Finnis more particularly describes the good of knowledge as that of speculative knowledge, explaining that this good is the good of knowledge being " sought for its own sake. This reference to knowledge can also be articulated as truth" so that one can say that this is truth sought for its own sake in the same manner as knowledge. Here, Finnis is not describing an instrumental use of knowledge, but rather " the pure desire to know' merely

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out of curiosity and " an nterest in or concern for truth and a desire to avoid ignorance or error " Finn's's primary argument for the value of the knowledge, as for the value of other items on his list, is by appeal to the reader's intuition: It is obvious that those who are well-informed, etc. simply are better-off(other thing being equal) than someone who is muddled, deluded, and ignorant, that the state of the former is better that the state of the latter, not just in particular case of that, but in all cases, as such, universally, and whether I like it Otr not. Knowledge is better that ignorance