

# Criminal ethics: determining right from wrong assignment

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Criminal Ethics: Determining Right from Wrong BY dogs Criminal Ethics Since no one in this world is perfect, ethical dilemmas exist on a daily basis. We have all been in situations where we have felt unsure of how to morally proceed on a specific issue. While we all eventually come up with a resolution to our dilemmas, it's something that we all handle differently, resulting in many ethical systems to choose from. Depending on what a person's personal values are, he or she might choose to handle a situation differently.

In Ethical Dilemmas and Decisions in Criminal Justice by Jocosey Pollock, there are seven different ethical systems outlined that show how different people deal with certain ethical dilemmas. In her book, Pollock gives us situations to examine in order to analyze how a particular system might view a dilemma. One scenario deals with a manager in a retail store. With permission from the owner, the manager has hired a classmate that he or she knows personally to help out in the store. One day the manager catches the classmate stealing.

After confronting the classmate about the theft, he or she laughs and excuses the theft by reclaiming that the owner is insured, no one is hurt, and it was under \$100. The classmate then goes on to plead that " friends should stick together," and therefore the manager should not report her (Pollock 49). Wrong Using the scenario in Pollack's book, it's easy to imagine how each of the systems would react to this situation. Under the ethics of virtue system, would immediately report the classmate to the owner of the store.

HTH that thrives on character. It says that we all have the ability to learn right from wrong, and ignorance is no exception to this. When one chooses a moral path she will act virtuously out of habit. On the other hand, when one chooses an immoral path, he or she will tend to act that way more and more (Pollock 27). To stay on a path of morality it's clear that the manager would not allow go unnoticed. Similarly to the virtue system, the natural law system would condemn the classmate and probably report him or her to the owner.

Natural law assumes that "morality is part of the natural order of the universe" (Pollack). Therefore, it doesn't matter what part of the world one comes from, certain actions are naturally recognized as wrong or right. We know it's wrong because theft would violate a person's trust in another person, giving us a natural warning to avoid that person. This system is comparable to the religion system. In the religion system there is a belief that we know right and wrong, but unlike the natural law system, religion gives consequences to immorality through God's wrath.

By stealing, the classmate is going against the rules, and therefore the manager would have to report him or her. In the natural law system, God is the Judge of morality, and if one is following his guidelines on who is right and wrong, it's easy to determine a response to an ethical dilemma. Even the religions around the world are different, they are all still based on the one God or Gods that teach a list of rules that their followers must rely upon. In the ethics of virtue system, the natural law system, and the religion system, while slightly different, would all feel ethically responsible for reporting the classmate to the store.

Not reporting the classmate would be a violation of morals manager would be considered no better than the thief if he or she kept secret. Ethical Formalism, another ethical system, is different from the afore systems because it states that " if an act or intent is inherently good, it is considered a good act even if it results in bad consequences" (Pollock 33 example, the classmate stealing was stealing because he or she was too afford clothes and therefore needed to steal them, an ethical formalist report the classmate to the owner.

Since, however, we don't know if that' probable that under this system, the classmate would be reported by the Stealing falls under a universal law, which means it's a rule that everyone follow if there is to be order in the world. So, because of this it's clear the formalist would report the theft to the owner of the store. A utilitarian s assume that " if one can show that an action significantly contributes to t good, then it is good" (Pollock 36). Like ethical formalism, a utilitarian sys have rules that are necessarily " black and white. However, in the case using the scenario in Pollack's BC systems would react to this situ would Immediately report the that thrives on character. It says wrong, and ignorance is no excess she will act virtuous out of habit. Immorally, he or she will tend to to stay on a path 01 morality It's c go unnoticed. Similarly to the v' condemn the classmate and prop assumes that " morally/ is part of Therefore, it doesn't matter what as theft is naturally bred within We know it's wrong because theft being. Vying us a natural warning memorable to the religion oyster know right and wrong, but unlike to immorality through God's wrath rules, and therefore the manage. God is the judge of morality, and wrong. It's easy to determine a re religions around <https://assignbuster.com/criminal-ethics-determining-right-from-wrong-assignment/>

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Not reporting the c manager would be considered n' Ethical Formalism, another edit systems because it states that " if considered a good act even if it r grapnel, the classmate stealing dotard clothes and therefore nee; report the classmate to the Owen rabble that under this system, Stealing falls under a universal fallow if there is to be order in the formalist would report the theft assume that " it one cent show the good, then it is good" (Pollock 36) nave rules that are necessarily " t classmate stealing, the theft does not benefit anyone coming up with a response to a dilemma, issues are system in order to determine if an act has the potent people. The manager and the owner in our ethical hurt in this situation. The manager would be left fee dishonest, while the owner of the store would lose p Therefore, the classmate would have to be reported since he or SSH inefficient from the theft. The final system, the ethics of care, would also eve making a decision. The ethics of care system would which all parties are supported in some way. Rather classmate and friend, the ethics of care system wool a solution that would end with his or her friendship allowing the thief to continue stealing. This system what's right or wrong.

Instead of causing a bigger is involved or a friendship could be ruined, this system offer his or her classmate a bargain. For example, manager could promise not to tell the owner about classmate quits the Job and does not return to the s reminders could be maintained, yet the manager w allowing the theft to continue. While there are many different ways to deal with down

to what kind of personality one has. As we grow up, we are instilled with values. If one grew up in a religious environment, one is more willing to use the religion system when dealing with moral dilemmas. However, in the end, all of the systems agree that the difference between right and wrong is not absolute. The way the right and wrong might be different, but in the end, they are using the best approach possible.

Most cultures around the world as humans don't usually tend to think of the moral such as concrete ways of labeling them as "ethical dilemmas" we immediately begin to analyze and understand certain concepts like for example, the FAA is supervised by adults and that it isn't right to drink alcohol or passing out of consciousness. However, without judgments that are correct, it's hard to comprehend why becoming an ethical professional requires one to understand the law into place. Once we understand why it's important why it's not okay to drink alcohol until one is incapacitated, moral rules we can live by and use as a guide (know that our laws are made to keep everyone as safe as possible from the harm that can come to a young child who is left without adult supervision, he or she is able to live by and believe in an ethical system in which to refer to when one finds himself in an ethical dilemma.

Therefore, once we understand why certain laws are put into place, we are less likely to follow them "just because we don't want to get into trouble" and more because it's just the right thing to do. Unfortunately, human error will always exist, which is why we have systems like law enforcement in place. Since our justice system is made up of laws created to keep us safe, it's important for all members to understand our moral codes and why they exist. Becoming an ethical professional is incredibly important, especially if

one chooses to work in the public sector. I have been working hard to complete my degree in Management Studies. In order to do this, I took a different business course in ethics that focused on the differences between working in the public sectors versus private sectors.

I found through my studies, that while it's important for all professionals to remain ethical at all times, the public sector are the ones who need to be most careful. Public professionals, such as the police are constantly focused on by outside forces. Someone who works outside the public's scrutiny has more leeway to behave in unethical ways. Less people are watching, and so it's easier to get away with certain behaviors. It doesn't make these unethical behaviors okay, but still, it's necessary to note that a non public sector professional has less to worry about than a public sector professional. For example, a police officer might spend a day making numerous DID arrests. That same police officer has to be careful of his or her own behavior while off duty and engaging in alcohol.

The public could view an off duty police officer who is drinking at a bar as somewhat of a hypocrite. Even if the off duty officer has a designated driver to transport him or her home, the public will definitely watch this person and his or her actions more carefully. Because of this, it is important to act professionally at all times. While it's okay and perfectly legal for an off duty officer to drink alcohol in a bar on his or her own time, he or she still needs to be aware of what he or she represents to the community. If a member of the public sector such as a police officer feels pressure outside of his or her

Job, one can only imagine the pressure that is put on this same person to maintain an ethical atmosphere within his Job.

It is noted in Jocosey Pollock's book that " criminal Justice professionals should be able to recognize quickly the ethical consequences of various actions and moral principles involved" (5); however, this is not always the case. Studying ethics would be unnecessary if all criminal Justice professionals recognized an ethical dilemma when they saw one. Even worse, most professionals are able to recognize an ethical dilemma and its consequences but still make the wrong decision. Human nature sometimes causes people to behave in unsanitary ways when we feel either threatened or unfairly treated. This has been proven in many cases such as ones involving coercion, payoffs, deception and use of force.

In order for any professional to constantly perform ethically, he or she must educate oneself and perhaps follow a series of steps that will allow the individual to come up with an ethical resolution. These steps may include identifying the facts of the situation, identify one's values, identify all possible moral dilemmas for each party involved, decide what is the most immediate moral or ethical issue facing the individual, and resolve the dilemma using an ethical system of decision making (Pollock 24).

Illustrations of how the stated steps above might help an individual successfully get himself or herself out of an ethical dilemma can be seen using an example that has happened within law enforcement agencies in the past. Let's examine the following dilemma: A police officer arrests a man he found to be driving while intoxicated.



The man was clearly drunk, and he deserved to be arrested because if not, he could have crashed his car, potentially hurting another human being. Now, let's suppose that the next day the same officer pulls over another man he determines could possibly be driving under the influence of alcohol. When the officer pulls the man over, he realizes it's the son of his boss, the police chief. Because police officers have the power of using police discretion, this particular officer calls his boss to explain the situation before putting his son under arrest. His boss asks him to bring his son to the police station, but not to arrest him. What should the officer do? If he doesn't arrest the chief's son, he is a hypocrite, and he is promoting unsafe behavior that could impact public safety.

If he does arrest the chief's son, he is putting his own job in jeopardy by potentially harming the police chief's reputation, therefore possibly creating an uncomfortable work environment. The easiest option for the officer would be to make sure no one heard of what happened and hope that the police chief gets his son help so that he does not drive drunk again. However, ethically, it would be wrong to let the chief's son go free without any consequence to his crime that could've potentially killed another person. Using the steps above, the officer should first identify the facts of the situation. Just like the arrest he made the previous day, the officer found himself in front of a man who could potentially hurt another human being due to the immoral choice of driving while drunk.

In addition to this, the facts remain that the officer is someone who has the power to make a decision about this topic, yet his duty as a public servant is

to enforce the law. Knowing all of this, the officer next needs to consider his values and concepts about those he works with. He will probably feel a loyalty or duty to his police chief which is probably the hardest part of any ethical dilemma. If we didn't feel morally tied to a specific person or concept, it would be much easier to make the right moral choice. However, because we do feel such emotions, like the officer feels towards his police chief, it's hard to make the right decision. However, knowing and expressing our feelings about all parties involved in the dilemma help to think about the situation objectively and honestly.

After identifying the facts and values regarding his situation, this particular police officer should think about all the moral dilemmas for each party involved. The dilemma the officer faces is obvious: if he arrests the chief's son, he will be following his duty as a public servant, but he would probably lose the respect of his chief. Not only this, but if this issue somehow became public, the officer could lose his job and credibility as a public servant. The chief too is also involved in an ethical dilemma. He clearly cares so much about his son, that he is willing to place his own morals and beliefs aside to get his son out of trouble. Unfortunately, however, this choice places others in an uncomfortable position where they must choose between their beliefs and personal feelings towards the chief.

The chief is, in effect creating an uncomfortable work environment, breeding dishonesty and corruption among his staff members. Again, if the case was made public, the police chief and his officer would most likely face a consequence that could cost them both their jobs. Finally, the police officer

would have to use the above facts and ideas to really come up with a decision that's most ethical. Most ethical systems are not self-serving. Therefore, a moral or ethical dilemma cannot be decided using the easiest path or choice. It would be self serving, and easier, if the police officer forgot about his potential arrest and allowed his chief to handle his son's illegal activity on his own in his own manner.

However, this would be deceiving towards the public, who trusts the officer to maintain their safety and their family's safety by enforcing laws created to preserve human life. To go further with our example above, let's suppose that the police officer decide to help the chiefs son and not arrest him. Let's also suppose that somehow the situation became public and is now source of contention within the community. The community would most likely feel outraged at the inequality shown towards its citizens. Basically, by not arresting the chiefs son, a message was given that unlike what is stated in the law, the citizens in the community are not in fact equal as they're supposed to be.

Unfortunately the message shown was that those with special privileges such as being lucky enough to be born as the police chiefs son, allows one to escape the consequences of certain actions. At this point in the scenario, corrective justice comes into play. In order to recreate harmony in the community, the police officer, the police chief and the chief son would have to somehow show retribution for their crimes. In the case of the officer and police chief, retribution might be shown by stepping down from their positions. While the officer may have thought he was doing something

helpful for the police chief and his son, he was also relinquishing the trust in which the community had in him.

The police chief's son might show retribution by giving up on his innocence and instead allowing himself to be legally charged with the crime of driving under the influence of alcohol. By actually feeling the consequences to their actions, it is then our hope that each individual involved in the case will morally grow as ethical persons. After analyzing this particular scenario, it's important to note that just because something is a law, doesn't mean it's necessarily a moral compass to follow. Because laws are created by human beings, there always needs to be the awareness that it could still be arbitrary or unfair. This is why we in the United States of America have such a complex justice system.

Laws are constantly being reviewed and changed, which is why one must possess his or her own ethical nature and not rely on others to tell him or her how to behave morally. There are those in society who believe they are moral and ethical beings just because they follow the law. However, the Nazi led by Adolf Hitler, was a perfect example of when civil disobedience could be viewed as a positive occurrence. German law once stated that Jews were no longer citizens and could not live amongst the rest of the population. They were imprisoned and oppressed, and any citizen who helped them was considered no better than a Jew. While the German government maybe believed they were doing the best for their country, some citizens used their moral compasses ingrained in us as human beings.

Some German citizens realized that ethically we are not supposed to hurt any other person on the planet and in turn broke the law to help their fellow man, even if that man was a different ethnicity. Yet, others just thought that the government knew best. Those who followed the German government at the time thought they were moral and ethical beings simply because they were following the law. As Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "A just law is one that is consistent with morality. An unjust law is any that degrades human personality or compels a minority to obey something the majority does not adhere to or is a law that the minority had no part in making" (Pollock 72). Unfortunately, some people don't realize that not all immoral acts are illegal. Adultery for example, is something that can be considered immoral yet it is not illegal.

When becoming a professional, especially in the public sector, it is so important to really take hold of an ethical system and use it to guide one's self through all the dilemmas that might arise. It isn't always necessarily easy to determine right from wrong, but ultimately the importance in doing so is something that can affect a person's life and career in a very serious way. Works Cited Pollock, Jocelyn. Ethical Dilemmas and Decisions in Criminal Justice. United States: Headwords Learning, 2014. Are moral and ethical beings just because they follow the law. However, the Nazi era led by Adolf Hitler, was a perfect example of when civil disobedience could be viewed as a moral act and could not be lived amongst the rest of the population.