

Social contract ethics

[Science](#), [Social Science](#)



Social Contract Ethics School The concept of social contract requires wide exploration and analysis of its aspects, because as far as the theory concerns society in general there are a lot of things and contradictions to think about. The ethical issue of the concept claims to some special moral principles the participants of social contract should follow. In general, the main ethical problem is how to cohabitate with others treating them equally, that's why beneficence and willingness to sacrifice your own interests for others' sake are the basic moral principles of social contract.

The theory of social contract describes a special unspoken social agreement that helps people to live in society and create normal functioning state. The idea of social contract originated in philosophical doctrines of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. Even though all of them used the notion " social contract", each of them had different understanding of how exactly people conclude the contract. This means that ethical principles of social contract are also different for each theory. Still all of them agreed in one crucial point: to create efficient social contract every individual should follow the terms established in the particular kind of agreement. In fact this means that if people live together they need to sacrifice a part of their personal freedom and restrict themselves in different aspects of their lives (Holcombe 1978). It is quite obvious that any ethics require some sorts of restrictions of human personal freedom. As far as humans are the kind of beings who frequently make certain actions that can be harmful for others who live next to them in society, ethical principles are supposed to teach humans how to act not to harm. Basically, the main principle of social contract ethics is: do as you would be done by. Otherwise it would've been impossible for people to

cohabit together.

Hobbes' doctrine of social contract claims that people need to conclude the kind of agreement because their nature is evil and destructive. According to the agreement people give their personal freedom under someone's control (either monarch's or government's) and the society lives in order following some strict rules established by the dictator. Locke's doctrine argues that the aim of social contract is to keep people's personal freedom and individuality by making the kind of law which simultaneously satisfies people's personal and common needs. It turns out that the aim of social contract is one, but ethical realizations of it depend on the essence of human nature. That's why the idea of treating others as we would be treated by is the main rule people should follow in all the aspects of the society where social contract works (Wempe 2005).

Considering the theory of social contract it is very important to notice the fact that when people cohabit together the only principle they should follow strictly is to do as they would be done by. Because evidently people know what is good and bad and they don't feel comfortable when others treat them unfairly.

References

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