

# Virtue ethics: utilitarianism

Religion



Ethics Utilitarianism, deontological ethics and virtue ethics are similar in that all are theories of ethics and all intend the well-being of s involved in their own respective ways. The three differ in their addressing of ethics and morality. Utilitarianism considers the results of an action irrespective of the apparent justification of an action. If the results are favorable and bring happiness to the subjects involved, the action is ethically justified. The action is deemed ethically unjustified if results are unfavorable. Deontological ethics necessitate an individual to evaluate all the possible options and choose the one that is theoretically right, irrespective of the consequences. Deontological ethics consider moral principles universalizable. Virtue ethics emphasizes upon the moral character of the individual who is doing a certain action. As long as the individual is displaying good ethics, the actions are right whether or not they bear good consequences.

Once I saw an old man with a stick trying to cross the road. He was caught in the middle of traffic and was just about to be knocked out by a passing car. I went ahead to his help and escorted him across the road. This act of mine was ethically justified as per the virtue theory of ethics as I have displayed good character. My action looks right. I have complied with the universal value of helping the old people. Virtues are admirable traits of character (Garrett, 2005). These admirable traits include but are not limited to respecting others, helping others, always speaking truth and being clean etc. Values are norms and beliefs of individuals that may not be detectable by others unless communicated to them. Values in an individual are inculcated to a large extent by the culture the individual lives in. People who live in the Western culture and those who live in the Eastern culture have many different and complementing values. Moral concepts are fundamentally one's

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beliefs of morality. There is a very subjective difference between values and moral concepts. Values are one's beliefs about how something should be done and moral concepts dictate why that thing needs to be done. Moral concepts emerge from one's values. Thus, one's values produce one's moral concepts which in turn make one display virtues to a certain extent.

References:

Garrett. (2005, Nov. 28). Virtue Ethics. Retrieved from <http://www.wku.edu/~jan.garrett/ethics/virtthry.htm>.