

Ethics



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Ethics Utilitarianism is a philosophical theory that explains actions or behaviors of individuals. It analyzes the degree of right and wrong and that the choice that an individual makes on certain actions is the one that has greatest utility. According to the original proprietors of this theory, each individual behavior or action is evaluated on the basis of the utility rule. Therefore, actions are evaluated on principles that, if are widely adhered to, would lead to the greatest good of people in society. It is logical to argue that it is possible to use utilitarianism to justify human rights and object certain harms on people in society.

The problem with these principles is that it does not explain what happens to those violating the rules that would lead to achievement of happiness for majority in society. This theory should maintain its utility principle as ultimate standard and no principle in society should stand against it (Baier 41). This theory fails to state which human rights could not be violated for the benefit of the entire society. For instance, murder of an innocent person would seem to be accepted if it served the role of the greatest majority. The issue of abortion has been a subject of heated debate in society and people seem to be having different opinions. According to utilitarianism principle, abortion is bad since it will not promote greatest good of society if the fetus is terminated.

Social ethics focuses on what is right conduct and living good life. This branch of philosophy describes how people relate to each other in society or social institutions such as family and business. It is the duty of everyone to support those in authority and live according to the laid down societal norms. It is the responsibility of citizens to nurture moral philosophy of other people in order to develop strong friendship and engage in social relationship for the

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good of society.

Most people in society are ignorant of social ethics as they are not aware of the unwritten social ethics that society has programmed since its inception (Baier 39). The main reason for this action is that everyone is not made aware of social ethics in the same way. Social ethics are part of an individual's education and that it depends entirely on observation. Different people view or observe society in different manner. Abortion is a social dilemma, according to social ethics, aborting means killing or murder since that fetus has got life. Using this theory of social ethics, abortion would not be condoned.

Egoism is based on the basis that each person has one ultimate goal which is personal interest or welfare. It describes what one ought to do as opposed to what one does do in society. In order to attain ones ultimate self interest, the action that a person commits should be morally right and justified. In addition, the behavior or action should be rational enough to fully satisfy ones interest (Baier 44-48). For instance, I desire welfare by playing basketball and helping others in society. Ethical egoism states that each a person requires the cooperation or help of one another in order to obtain goods such as friendship and defense. If I act selfishly, others will ignore me and consequently fail to cooperate with me. Therefore, egoism requires a person to do certain acts that bring maximum satisfaction of his or her needs. Egoism may allow someone to abort because the action seems to bring happiness to the person committing the action since it serves personal interest and desires.

Relativism holds to the idea that there are no absolute moral values or laws that determine the morality of our actions. Of course, to argue that there are

no moral absolutes is to assert an absolute itself (Baier 57-59). For the subjectivist or relativists, values are important but their status is calculated in different ways, depending upon by whatever school one holds within the subjectivist camp or tradition. For example, personal subjectivism says the final court of moral opinion should rest with the individual's personal desires and attitudes. The normative relativists say the final court of moral opinion should rest with one's culture or society. The emotivist relativist argues that moral opinions ought to be determined by a person's sentiment. A person may decide to abort if the action upholds to her personal desires.

Care ethics is also known as virtue ethics which was developed on the basis that human beings are relational and interdependence creatures, therefore, it described the importance of relationships based on virtues such as care, mercy, friendship and sensitivity. Care ethics holds that human beings entirely depend on one another (Baier 76). For instance, parents have moral role to care for children while children on the other hand have a moral duty to care for the old in society. Abortion would not be condoned since care ethics calls human beings to care for others even the unborn. It is possible to influence the solution for this dilemma by laying down my responsibility to respect human beings even if they are not yet born but they got life to live and at sometime their help will be required.

Work Cited

Baier, Annette. *Moral Prejudices: Essays on Ethics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994. Print.