

Utilitarianism vs.  
nozick, bentham,  
hume vs. kant, and  
veil of ignorance  
rawl's t...



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### *Nozick versus Utilitarianism*

" *Utilitarianism* " holds that " *an act is moral if it is done to achieve the greatest happiness for the greatest number* " (Kay, 2007, n. p.). Nozick said that an act should not be based on the " *g reatest happiness for the greatest number* " since it could lead to a circumstances wherein the needs of the greater part of the populace may be sacrificed by one person (Rivera - Lopez, n. d., n. p.). For instance, what if more people will be happy if one person is punished for a crime that he did not even commit, let's say, the judgment was wrong ... this only shows that the concept of " *utilitarianism* " is also flawed (Rivera - Lopez, n. d., n. p.).

### *Bentham's Method of Determining the Right Acts and Laws*

For Jeremy Bentham, an act or law is right only if it tends to bring into being profit, improvement, happiness, superiority, or bliss or to avoid trouble, pain, malevolence, or gloom to the person whose " *interest is considered* " (Bentham, 1948, p. 126).

### *Kantian versus Hume's Ethics*

According to Immanuel Kant, an act is moral if it is done out of responsibility/duty and not because one is too emotional or there is a reward (Theological Studies, 2004, n. p.). On the other hand, according to David Hume, an act is moral if it was " *derived from the virtue with which it was performed* " which takes place because of " *experience and moral education* " (The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2006, n. p.). Simply put, for him, " *an act is moral* " if the one carrying out the action possesses the " *qualities*

*useful to others, qualities useful to oneself, qualities agreeable to others, and qualities agreeable to oneself”* (The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2006, n. p.).

### *Veil of Ignorance / Its Role in Rawl's Theory*

The “ *veil of ignorance* ” abolishes “ self-interest” (Kukathas et. al., 1990, p. 18). If one requests what to decide on, he or she should select “ *under a veil of ignorance* ” since here it is thought that one is not sensitive of how the different picks will affect one’s “ *situation since he or she is obliged to evaluate principles solely on the basis of general considerations* ” (Kukathas et. al., 1990, p. 19). Here, one is not aware of: “ *economic status* ”; “ *skills/abilities/strengths; etcetera* ” (Kukathas et. al., 1990, p. 19). Also, a person in the “ *veil of ignorance* ” will want a culture that cares for everybody in a just manner because no one wishes to experience an “ *intolerable position* ” (Kukathas et. al., 1990, pp. 36 - 59). That is clearly the role of the “ *veil of ignorance* ” to “ *Rawl's theory of justice* ” - it helped establish a “ just” culture (Rawls, 1971, pp. 1 - 607).

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