

Ethical problems of gambling essay



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Ethical Problems of Gambling Gambling can become a serious addiction and just as serious as alcohol or drug abuse. Some find gambling to be a distraction taking them away from the problems of their everyday life. Many examples of gambling are sports betting and casinos, which are illegal in most states, horse betting, card playing, playing the lottery and now there are websites for betting online.

According to Little (2011), “ The ability to fund the activity through online bank transactions and credit cards contributes to addictive online gambling” (para. 3). For those that have an addiction to gambling, online games and websites, makes it harder for them to resist the urge to gamble as well as making it easier for them to gamble, since they can now do it in the privacy of their home. All of these examples can prove problematic. The whole idea of gambling can lead to an array of problems for the individual and their loved ones by causing ethical and moral problems for all involved.

With gambling there can be an extensive amount of debt, loss of employment, lying, stealing, mental anguish, not only for the participant of the gambling, but for their families as well. These actions and their consequences can sometimes rip families apart. Gambling can also cause numerous ethical problems for society as a whole. Gambling can be a magnet for crime, ruin work ethic, and attract prostitution. Price J. (2006) stated “ Crime predictably rises three to four years following the opening of a casino as problem and pathological gamblers begin to deplete their resources” (p. 1).

With a person's serious addiction to gambling, they will use any means necessary to feed their addiction. Some will commit assault, rob, and may even go as far as murder to get the money they need to fulfill their needs. With the building of casinos and even illegal gambling, crime rates in those areas seem to escalate. In an article entitled "Calculating Consequences: The Utilitarian Approach to Ethics", the authors point out that utilitarianism requires that we assign values to the harms and benefits as a result of our actions and compare them with the harm and benefits that might result if we choose different actions.

Andre, C. and Velasquez, M. (n. d.). Many gamblers justify their acts of deception through utilitarianism. They think only about their own happiness and not how gambling is destroying the lives of their family members. They look only to the good that a major win can accomplish and do not weigh the harm their actions are causing. The principle of ethical utilitarianism was founded by James Bentham. In utilitarianism one must decide that if an action is correct, it will promote happiness for all involved. An action is found to be incorrect when it does not bring happiness to anyone.

Utilitarianism focuses more on the consequences of the action as opposed to the motives of the agent. It places the focus of right and wrong solely on the outcomes of the action, not on the acts per say. It takes into consideration the interests of others, before the interest of the individual performing the action. When a person practices ethical egoism, it could be said that what they want is right and anything that interferes with what they want is considered wrong. For some this may seem selfish. As stated by Mosser, K. (2010) "Selfishness," for the egoist, is simply used to recognize that people

act, or should act, in their own self-interest. The egoist thinks being selfish can be a good thing (Section 1. 8, Paragraph 22). Ethical egoism is based on self interest. According to Regis, E (1980) an ethical egoist would view that a person's behavior and actions should be solely based on the interest of their own. Everyone should look after their own interests. I feel that an ethical egoist is morally required to themselves as happy as possible. There is no moral obligation to anyone else.

It can be said that ethical egoism is an idea that each person ought to pursue their self interest exclusively. Utilitarianism and ethical egoism are very similar in that in both cases the party sees only what makes them happy. However, they are different in that those you practice utilitarianism do not feel that their own interests are more important than the interests of others, whereas those who practice ethical egoism are selfish and feel that their own interests always come first. Gambling can be a major problem, not only to the gambler himself, but also for their family. As we can see, many consider it a selfish and egotistical act.

The gambler is more concerned with his or her own needs than the needs of others. Gambling can lead to compulsive behavior wherein the gambler is unable to resist the impulse to gamble which can lead to several personal and social consequences. It is a disease which affects millions of people. While the gambler is just looking for his quick fix, he does not look at the repercussions of his gambling problem. I feel that although utilitarianism and ethical egoism are similar, the views of those that practice utilitarianism are more ethical, in that they do not put themselves and their actions above others.

Whereas the ethical egoist is found to be selfish. With a compulsive gambler, they do not look at the affects their gambling has on others. They do what they feel is necessary to fulfill their needs. Not thinking of others. The compulsive gambler cannot be said to be unselfish. It is a disease to which one needs intervention and help. Utilitarianism could maybe resolve the problems of gambling. A person needs to realize that their actions will affect the others around them. If a person has a family to support and take care of, they need to see that by gambling, money can become scarce quickly.

After that a heap of other problems can amount. From the point of view of the utilitarian, if the person wishes to gamble, maybe they can do it in ways that may benefit everyone. They do not necessarily have to stop their gambling habit, but use it in a way that would not put their interests above anyone else. One way that this can be done is through investing.

Investments are always a gamble. They can go either way. If you invest your money, you may come out ahead. This way you will be putting your money aside with the hopes of increasing it. Take a gamble and invest in stocks and bonds.

From the standpoint of a utilitarian, yes you are still gambling, doing what interests you. On the other hand, this gamble can have a good outcome. Benefiting all involved and not putting one's interests ahead of others. Gambling has been going on in this country for hundreds of year and knows no boundaries. It does not discriminate. Starting from the working class individual to a baseball legend. It does not make a difference what your income is. Either way, the affects can be detrimental to the person and those

around them. As a child of a compulsive gambler, I know firsthand the effects of gambling.

Unfortunately, my father was and still is a compulsive gambler. He always thought the more he gambled the more chance he had on winning big. I think his mind set was and still is that it would be great to hit it big. What he failed to realize, is that he would never be on top. With all the money spent and loans taken out, he would never be ahead. Well, I could tell you that he was 100% wrong. Due to his compulsiveness, we had to struggle to live. Sometimes there was never enough money for the essentials. It took its toll on all of us. He was a ticking time bomb.

We never knew what our day would be like when he walked through the door. If he had a good day, all was good. If he lost, well, let us just say that things were total chaos. His bad day at the horse track would result in a bad day for all. My father would never admit his problem and never listened to how it affected the family. He had his mind made up. This was something he enjoyed. Something that he did to pass the time. No one was going to tell him different. It did not matter. As a result, my father lost a lot more than he anticipated. He lost his family.

My mother finally left him and he left her with years and years of debt and anguish. Today he is still doing his thing, but with a different outcome. His “hobby” no longer affects anyone else, but himself. To this day he still does not comprehend why he is always broke and why he does not own his own home. He will never admit that his gambling addiction was what tore his family apart. Regardless of the outcome of his past actions, my father will

never stop at pursuing his dream of “ hitting it big. ” Pete Rose was an outstanding baseball player. He played in more than a dozen All Star games. He was a two time golden glove winner and even a World Series MVP. In 1984 Rose became the manager of the Cincinnati Reds. His career came to a halt in 1989. After being investigated, it was found that Pete Rose was gambling thousands of dollars on games when he was both a player and a manager. Of course he denied the allegations. The evidence was clear. He was found to have been placing bets for nearly twenty years. His defense was that he only bet on his team to win, never to lose. Chass, M. (2007) states that “ According to the Dowd report, which included a diary of bets that Rose made on Reds games and many others — it listed bets on 390 games over all, 52 of them involving the Reds, in a three-month period in 1987 — Rose developed a consistency of not betting on certain contests” (Paragraph 8). Rose lost his eligibility to be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. He was also banned from the sport of baseball for life. Although he was a great baseball player, his actions were in fact wrong. He broke the rules. A rule that the Major League does not take lightly. In 2004 Pete Rose publically admitted that he did in fact bet on baseball. His actions greatly affected him.

It tarnished his reputation and allowed him to miss out on the chance to become a Major League Baseball hall of famer. From my experience, I would have to say that my view on gambling is closer to the theory of utilitarianism. I feel that a person should weigh their options. Take into consideration how their actions will affect others. As human beings, we should treat others as we ourselves want to be treated. We should think

about how, with our actions, we can make the outcome positive for all. The theory of utilitarianism teaches common sense. With respect to gambling, no one can be truly happy.

Neither the individual gambler nor the persons involved can benefit. In regards to the views of the utilitarian theory, one should take another's interests before their own. I have always believed that my actions will reflect onto the others around me. The actions of a gambler will never produce a good outcome. Especially if there are others involved. I believe that when someone is responsible for another, they should take into consideration that person or persons. They should make sure that their actions will bring happiness to everyone. Unfortunately, in this case, happiness is a moot point.

In today's society people are given too many opportunities to gamble. What some fail to realize is that gambling can become highly addictive. For first time gamblers, the rush of a win feels great. This can lead to this person to continue on. Hence, the addictive nature. They are given the illusion that the more they gamble, the better their chances are in making a lot of money. It can turn them into a person that will go to any means to achieve their goal. Whether it is stealing, lying, committing a crime or hurting another individual. Some pathological gamblers can also become a danger to themselves.

It can cause stress and anxiety. To go even further, it can cause depression or even suicidal tendencies. Gambling then becomes not only an ethical issue, but also a moral one. Gambling can be damaging not only to the

individual, but also to their families. Many problems can arise. Physical and emotional abuse can occur. The physical and mental health of those around them can be affected. It can also be damaging to any children involved.

Gambling is a serious disease, which should not be taken lightly. Sometimes when one realizes they have a problem it is too late.

Not only have they lost financially, but they have lost emotionally and physically. With gambling there are no real winners.

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