Announcements

• Writing assignment (W1) posted
• Practice peer reviews (R0) posted
• Due in 1 week
• Trial iclicker today
MORALITY
Normative vs. Descriptive

• *descriptive* – the way people *are* (facts)
  – Sociology, psychology, etc.

• *normative* – the way people *should be* (values)
  – Morality
Morality

• System of rules for guiding human conduct
• System of principles for evaluating those rules
• Purpose: prevent or alleviate harm and suffering
  – also (possibly) to promote human flourishing
Moral System

• Public: everyone knows the rules
• Informal: not enforced by law
• Rational: based on principles of logic and reason understood by all moral agents
• Impartial: moral rules are designed to apply equitably to all participants
Which choice is better?
COMMON HESITATIONS
1) People disagree.

- experts in many fields disagree
- we agree on many moral issues
- we can agree on *principles* while disagreeing about *facts*
2) Who am I to judge others?

- we judge people all the time
- we can judge without condemning
- we are morally obligated to judge others
3) Morality is a personal choice.

- This is an oxymoron (self-contradictory)
  - Morals are *public*.
- This is *moral subjectivism* - individuals decide what is moral.
4) Morality is cultural.

- *cultural relativism* - different cultures have different beliefs about what is moral (descriptive) (*is*)
- *moral relativism* - we should not morally evaluate other moral systems, because there is no objective morality (normative) (*ought*)
- *cultural relativism* does not imply *moral relativism*. 
4) Morality is cultural.

- *moral absolutism* - only *one* correct answer to any moral question
- *moral absolutism vs. moral relativism* is a false dilemma
- *ethical objectivism* - a plurality of plausible answers, as long as rational criteria are satisfied
ETHICS
Ethics

• The philosophical study of moral issues.
• Moral *principles* derived from and grounded in *philosophy*.
• Theories tested using logical argumentation.
• * Remain open to different sides of a dispute.*
ETHICAL THEORIES
Ethical Theories

• Criteria for an ethical theory:
  – internally coherent and consistent
  – comprehensive
  – systematic

• We will learn 3 major theories
  – All consistent with ethical objectivism
  – All define an *intrinsic good*
1) Consequence-based

- Primary goal of moral system is to produce desirable outcomes for moral agents
- Called *utilitarianism*
Which choice is better?

A

B
2) Duty-based

• Morality is grounded in moral agents’ obligations to one another
• Also called deontology
• Categorical imperative – *Always act on that maxim whereby you can, at the same time, will that it should become a universal law.*

Immanuel Kant
Which choice is better?

A

B
3) Character-Based

• Morality is grounded in virtues
• Called virtue or Aristotelian ethics
• Lead to Eudaimonia - human flourishing
Example Virtues

- Honesty
- Loyalty
- Competence
- Fairness
- Compassion
- Friendliness
- Courage
- Citizenship
- Generosity
- Modesty
- Patience
- Wisdom
- Self-care
- Diligence
Which choice is better?

A

B
CYBERETHICS
Is “Cyberethics” Really a Thing?

• Cybertechnology is logical malleable
• Generates “new possibilities of human interaction”

YES!!!!!
Policy Vacuum

- Technology developed **before** policies are put in place
  - “policies” include laws **and** social norms
- “Conceptual muddles”
Disclosive Model

• Some features of technology are morally opaque
• Need disclosive method to identify them

Philip Brey
```sql
CREATE TABLE Person (
  first_name VARCHAR(20),
  sex ENUM('male', 'female'),
  age INT
);
```
Tavani’s Method

1. Identify the practice or feature
   a. Disclose morally opaque features
   b. Assess sociological implications
   c. Search for existing policies or ethical codes

2. Analyze the ethical issue
   a. Identify any policy vacuums
   b. Clear up conceptual muddles
Tavani’s Method

3. *Deliberate* on the ethical issue
   a. *Apply* one or more ethical theories
   b. *Justify* the position using logical argumentation
Many of our most serious conflicts are conflicts within ourselves. Those who suppose their judgments are always consistent are unreflective or dogmatic.

John Rawls