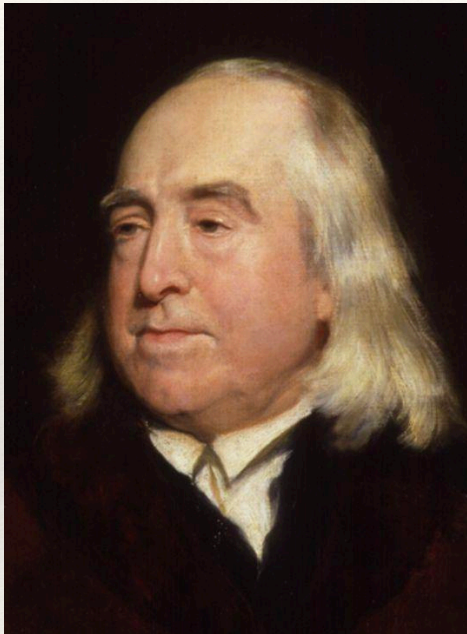

In defense of utilitarianism

Utilitarianism



Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832)

Intrinsic values

Pain

Pleasure

$$\text{Utility} = \text{Pleasure} - \text{Pain}$$

Bentham's utilitarianism

Definition:

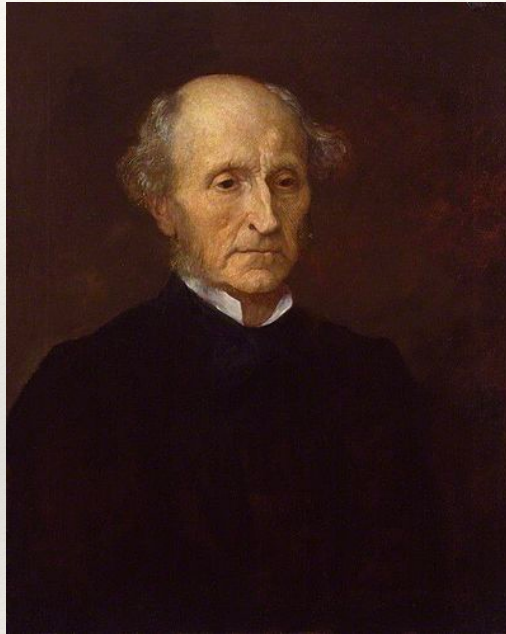
The doctrine that an action is right insofar as it promotes happiness, and that **the greatest happiness of the greatest numbers** should be the guiding principle of conduct

Utilitarianism

Objections:

- How do we measure happiness? The value of pain and pleasure
- Fails to respect individual rights

Utilitarianism



John Stuart Mill (1806-1873)

Utilitarianism

If I am asked, what I mean by difference of quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount, there is but one possible answer. Of two pleasures, if there be one which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure.

John Stuart Mill (Utilitarianism)

It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, are of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides.

John Stuart Mill (Utilitarianism)

Utilitarianism

“Justice is a name for certain moral requirements, which, regarded collectively, stand higher in the scale of social utility and are therefore of more paramount obligation than any others.”

John Stuart Mill (Utilitarianism)

Act and Rule Utilitarianism

Act Utilitarianism: judges each act by whether it has the best consequences

Rule Utilitarianism: judges each act by whether it falls under a moral rule that would, if it were generally adopted, have the best consequences

Brad Hooker (ideal code, real world, 2000)

Utilitarianism

It is the business of ethics to tell us what are our duties, or by what test we may know them; but no system of ethics requires that the sole motive of all we do shall be a feeling of duty;

John Stuart Mill (Utilitarianism)

Jeremy Bentham

