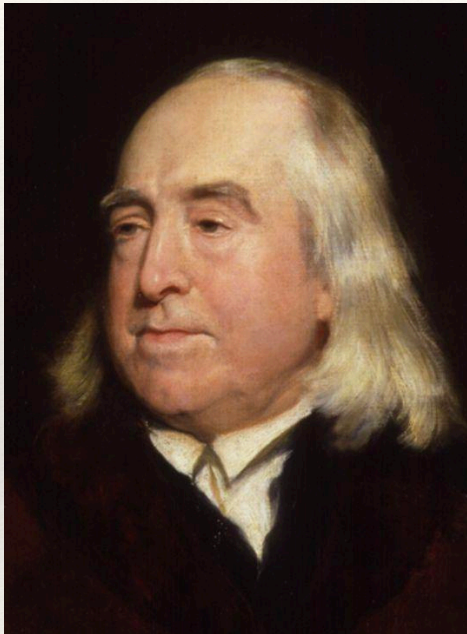

Deontology

Utilitarianism



Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832)

Intrinsic values

Pain

Pleasure

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



Doing utilitarian
ethics because
you agree with them



Doing
utilitarian ethics
because they're
easier than Kant

Immanuel Kant



Born Emanuel Kant, 1724-1804

“The father of modern ethics”, “the father of modern philosophy”

Main treatises:

Critique of Pure Reason (1781)

Groundwork on the metaphysics of morals (1785)

Considered to be the father of deontology
(from the Greek words for duty (“deon”) and
science (or study) of (“logos”))

Immanuel Kant

- ❖ What is freedom? How can we act freely?
- ❖ What is the supreme principle of morality?

Immanuel Kant

- ❖ Rejects utilitarianism
- ❖ All human beings have dignity that commands our respect
- ❖ It comes from the fact that
 - ❖ We are rational beings
 - ❖ We are autonomous (acting and choosing freely)

Immanuel Kant: Freedom

Kant agrees with the utilitarians: we are subject to pleasures and pains. However, those are not our “masters”.

When we respond to pleasure or pain, we act to natural necessity.



Immanuel Kant: Freedom

Autonomy

- ❖ To act freely
- ❖ To act according to a law I give myself

Heteronomy

- ❖ To act according to desires I have not chosen myself

We are not only sentient beings, governed by the pleasure and pain delivered by our senses; we are also rational beings, capable of reason. If reason determines my will, then the will becomes the power to choose independent of the dictates of nature or inclination.

Michael Sandel

Immanuel Kant: Freedom

- ❖ If we act autonomously, we do something for its own sake, “as an end in itself”.
- ❖ We cease to be instruments to purposes given outside us.
- ❖ This capacity to act freely is what gives human life its special dignity
- ❖ **Respecting human dignity means regarding people not just as a means to an end, but also as ends in themselves.**
- ❖ This is why it is wrong to use people for the sake of other people happiness

Immanuel Kant: Morality

What makes an action moral is the motivation for which the act is done

(Do the right thing for the right reason)

Only action done for the sake of the moral law (duty) have moral worth

When I act according to duty, only then am I acting freely (autonomously)

Immanuel Kant: Morality

*A good will isn't good because of what it effects or accomplishes, it's good in itself.
Even if by utmost effort the good will accomplishes nothing it would still shine like a jewel for its own sake as something which has full value in itself.*

Immanuel Kant: Contrasts

Morality

Motives

Duties vs inclinations

Freedom

Determination of will

Autonomous vs heteronomous

Reason

Imperatives

Imperatives

*If the action would be good solely as a means to something else, the imperative is hypothetical; if the action is represented as good in itself and therefore as necessary....
For a will which of itself accords with reason, then the imperative is categorical.*

Immanuel Kant: Contrasts

Morality

Motives

Duties vs inclinations

Freedom

Determination of will

Autonomous vs heteronomous

Reason

Imperatives

Categorical vs Hypothetical

Immanuel Kant: Contrasts

Morality

Motives

Duties

Freedom

Determination of will

Autonomous

Reason

Imperatives

Categorical

Categorical Imperatives

The formula of universal law:

“Act only on that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law”

This is the test for your action, not the reason for acting.

Categorical Imperatives

“But suppose, however, there were somethings whose existence has in itself an absolute value.... an end in itself... then in it, and in it alone, would there be the ground of a possible categorical imperative.”

Categorical Imperatives

“But suppose, however, there were somethings whose existence has in itself an absolute value.... an end in itself... then in it, and in it alone, would there be the ground of a possible categorical imperative.”

“I say that man, and in general every rational being, exists as an end in himself, not merely as a means for arbitrary use by this or that will.”

Categorical Imperatives

The formula of humanity as an end:

“Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time, as an end”

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The formula of humanity as an end:

“Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time, as an end”

It is OK to use someone (even ourselves) as a means, AS LONG AS we treat in a way that is consistent with respect to their dignity

Immanuel Kant: Questions

1. *How can we reconcile duty and autonomy?*

Acting out of duty is to follow a moral law that you impose on yourself

2. *How many moral laws are there?*

The moral law I choose is based on the same reason than someone else's moral law

3. *How is a categorical imperative possible?*

The idea of freedom makes me a member of an intelligible world