Dr. Mohammad O. Hamdan

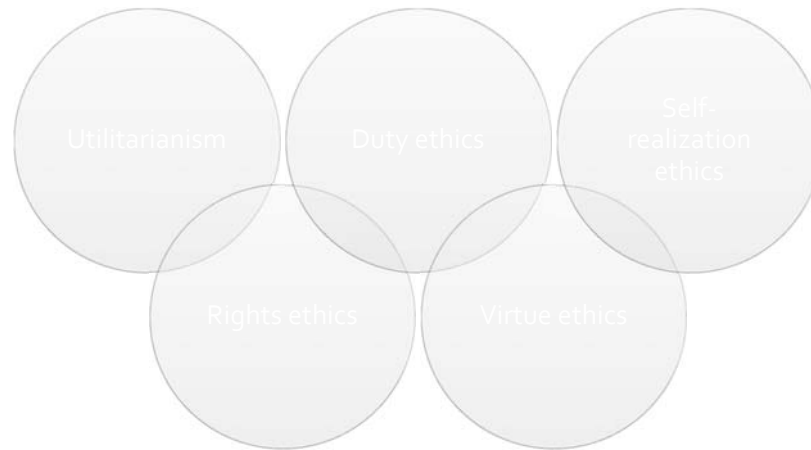# Ch3: Moral Frameworks

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Contents

1) Utilitarianism
2) Rights Ethics
3) Duty Ethics
4) Virtue Ethics
5) Self-Realization and Self-Interest

Ethical Theories

- We will discuss five types of **ethical theories** (and traditions) that have been especially influential

Utilitarianism

Duty ethics

Self-realization ethics

Rights ethics

Virtue ethics

(4) Virtue Ethics

- Virtue Ethics emphasizes *character* more than duties and rights.

- Character is the pattern of:
  - Virtues (morally desirable features)
  - Vices (morally undesirable features) in persons.

    immoral or wicked behavior.

(4) Virtue Ethics

clear or obvious

- Virtue Ethics : We should develop and manifest good characters as defined by the virtues-desirable habits or tendencies in action, commitment, motive, attitude, emotion, ways of reasoning and ways of relating to others.

(4) Virtue Ethics

- The most important virtue is practical wisdom, that is, *morally good judgment*, which enables us to discern the mean for all the other virtues. recognize

- The most comprehensive virtue of engineers is *Responsible Professionalism* .

(4) Virtue Ethics

Types (umbrella) of virtues Ethics:

healthy, or happy

1) **Public well-being:** *Public-spirited virtues* are focused on the good of clients and the wider public.

2) **Professional competence:** *Proficiency virtues* are the virtues of mastery of one's profession, in particular mastery of the technical skills that characterize good engineering practice.

3) **Cooperative practices:** *Teamwork virtues* are those that are especially important in enabling professionals to work successfully with other people.

4) **Personal integrity:** *self governance virtues* are those necessary in exercising moral responsibility.

(4) Theories of Virtue Ethics

- 3.3.2 Florman: Competence & Conscientious
    - Florman's emphasis on loyalty to *Employers.*
    - The essence of engineering ethics is *conscientiousness.*
- 3.3.3 Aristotle: Community & The Golden Mean
    - Aristotle's emphasis on loyalty to *Community.*
    - Virtues are tendencies to find the reasonable *(golden) mean between the extremes* of too much (excess) and too little (deficiency).
- 3.3.3 Alasdair MacIntyre: Virtue ethics is based on four ideas:
    - *Internal good*
    - *External good*
    - *Standard of excellence*
    - *Progress*

(5) Self-Realization Ethics & Self-Interest

- Each of the preceding ethical theories leaves considerable room for self-interest.

- *Utilitarianism* says that self-interest should enter into our calculations of the overall good;
- *Rights ethics* says we have rights to pursue our legitimate interests;
- *Duty ethics* says we have duties to ourselves;
- *Virtue ethics* links our personal good with participating in communities and social practices.
- *Self-realization ethics*: says right actions consists in seeking self-fulfilment.

(5) Self-Realization Ethics & Self-Interest

- Two versions of Self-Realization Ethics & Self-Interest :

self-interest
- **Ethical-egoism**: is a more individualistic version of self-realization ethics that says each of us ought always and only to promote our self-interes

- **Community-oriented**: the self to be realized is understood in terms of caring relationships and communities.

(5) Self-Realization Ethics & Self-Interest

What motivates Engineers?

1) Proficiency motives, center on excellence in meeting the technical standards of a profession, together with related aesthetic values of beauty.
2) Compensation motives are for social rewards such as income, power, recognition, and job or career stability.
3) Moral motives include desires to meet ones responsibilities, respect the rights of others, and contribute to the well-being of others.

(5) Self-Realization Ethics & Self-Interest

This theme is expressed by F. H. Bradley (1826-1924): "The 'individual' apart from the community is an abstraction. It is not anything real, and hence not anything that we can realize .... I am myself by sharing with others."

Religious Commitments

- Example: Mark Pesce who invented the dial-up networking.

Conclusion:
Which Ethical Theory is the Best?

- Ethical theories are attempts to provide clarity and consistency, systematic and comprehensive understanding, and helpful practical guidance in moral matters. Sound ethical theories succeed in meeting these aims.
  1. Clear and coherent. They rely on concepts (ideas) that are sufficiently clear to be applicable, and their various claims and principles are internally consistent.
  2. Organize basic moral values in a systematic and comprehensive way
  3. Provide helpful guidance that is compatible with our most carefully considered moral convictions