
NORMATIVE ETHICS - K.U

UTILITARIANISM

Utilitarianism is the moral theory that strives for the greatest aggregate happiness. It is based on three principles: Consequentialism, where the only thing worth valuing is the consequences; Hedonism; where we must strive for happiness; and Equity, where everyone's happiness counts equally. Act Utilitarianism, a branch of utilitarianism where each action is judged separately, uses two methods of calculation to show action would create the greatest aggregate happiness. These are Bentham's hedonic calculus, a method of calculation where 7 different factors are given a numerical value to work out the action that would create the greatest aggregate happiness; and component judges, where people who are able to differentiate pleasures tell us which pleasures are higher, or the more intellectual pleasures, and thus the one we should strive for; or Mill's higher or lower pleasures theory where competent judges, people who can differentiate pleasures, would tell us to strive for higher pleasures, or those intellectual pleasures, over lower pleasures, or those we share with animals. Rule Utilitarianism acts upon a set of rules which are formed because they generally create the greatest aggregate happiness.

KANTIANISM

Kantianism is the ethical theory that the right action in situations does not come from the consequences, like the consequentialist ethical theory of Utilitarianism, but rather from the moral laws that can be derived from our reasoning to decide if an action is right, making Kantianism a deontological theory. Kant based his theory around four main principles: duty vs inclination; we freely choose to act upon our duty to uphold the moral laws that come from our reasoning rather than acting solely out of our nature as human beings; the formulation of maxims, the general rules of behaviour for particular situations that show what the moral law actually states; the categorical imperative, to "act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will should become a universal law"; and universality, can that maxim be applied to everyone and everything.