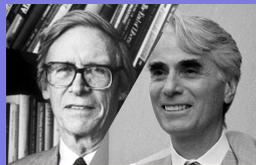


UTILITARIANISM

PPE 101

CONTENTS:
REVIEW RAWLS & NOZICK
UTILITARIANISM
J.S. MILL

RAWLS & NOZICK



RAWLS & NOZICK

Rawls

Two Principles of Justice:

- (1) Equal Rights
 - (2) Fair Equality of Opportunity, Difference Principle
- Original Position, Veil of Ignorance

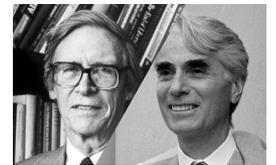
Nozick

The Entitlement Theory of Justice

(historical & non-patterned)

Wilt Chamberlain Argument (Liberty upsets patterns)

Redistributive Taxation wrongfully violates rights



UTILITARIANISM

UTILITARIANISM

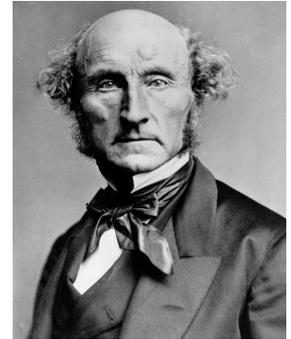


JOHN STUART MILL

UTILITARIANISM: WHAT IS IT?

John Stuart Mill:

“Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness.”



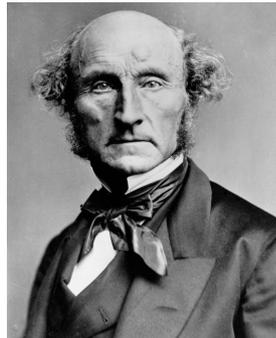
UTILITARIANISM: WHAT IS IT?

John Stuart Mill:

“Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness.”

Slogan:

The greatest good for the greatest number.



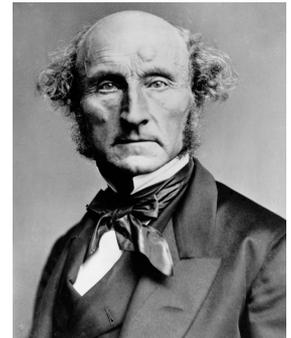
UTILITARIANISM: WHAT IS IT?

Value Claim:

Happiness is the only intrinsically good thing; unhappiness is the only intrinsically bad thing.

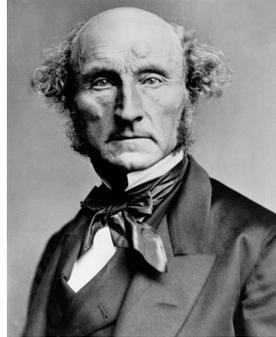
Action Claim:

Actions are morally right to the extent they promote the good and diminish the bad; actions are morally wrong to the extent they promote the bad and diminish the good.



JOHN STUART MILL (1806 - 1873)

- Influential British philosopher from the nineteenth century.
- Important public figure who pushed for liberal reforms; served in Parliament.
- Child prodigy; raised in the tradition of *Philosophical Radicalism*.
- Suffered a profound emotional and intellectual crisis in 1826, which influenced his views about happiness.



UTILITARIANISM: JEREMY BENTHAM (1748 - 1832)

Jeremy Bentham and James Mill (J.S. Mill's father) were *Hedonistic Utilitarians*.

Hedonism:

The only intrinsic good is *pleasure*; the only intrinsic bad is *pain*.



UTILITARIANISM: JEREMY BENTHAM (1748 - 1832)

Jeremy Bentham and James Mill (J.S. Mill's father) were *Hedonistic Utilitarians*.

Hedonism:

The only intrinsic good is *pleasure*; the only intrinsic bad is *pain*.

Psychological Egoism:

One's own pleasure is the only ultimate object of desire.



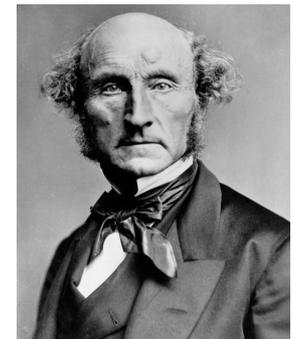
UTILITARIANISM: JOHN STUART MILL (1806 - 1873)

Objection: Hedonism is a theory of value only fit for swine.

Push-pin vs Poetry

Mill's Response:

There are higher and lower pleasures. And higher pleasures matter more than lower ones.

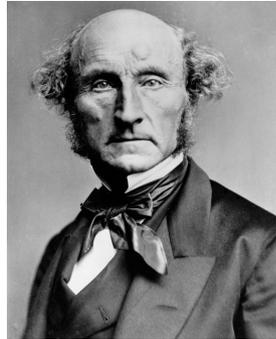


HIGHER AND LOWER PLEASURES

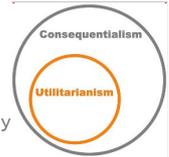
John Stuart Mill:

“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, is 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.”

How Can We Tell? Ask competent judges who've experienced both.



UTILITARIANISM: DEEPER LOOK



Value Claim:

The value of a complete world-history is determined by the amount of pleasure and suffering it contains. (*Hedonism*)

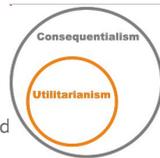
Aggregation:

Everyone's pleasure/suffering matters, and matters equally.

Action Claim:

An action is morally right when its outcome has greater value than the outcome of any of the alternative acts available; it's wrong otherwise. (*Consequentialism*)

UTILITARIANISM: DEEPER LOOK



Value Claim:

The value of a complete world-history is determined by the amount of pleasure and suffering it contains. (*Hedonism*)

Both Bentham and Mill are *Hedonistic Utilitarians*.

But there are other versions of Utilitarianism as well, corresponding to different views about *value*.

Example: Preference-satisfaction

UTILITARIANISM: DEEPER LOOK

Is *Hedonism* right?

The Experience Machine
(Robert Nozick).

If Hedonism is right, then it looks like you should hop into the experience machine.

Should you?



UTILITARIANISM: EXAMPLES



Suppose that you are a doctor on a remote island community. Nobody is monitoring you. No one will remember what you do.

Case 1:

You have a terminally ill patient who is in significant, untreatable pain. You can painlessly euthanize the patient.

What would the Utilitarian recommend that you do?

UTILITARIANISM: EXAMPLES



Suppose that you are a doctor on a remote island community. Nobody is monitoring you. No one will remember what you do.

Case 2:

Same as before, except that patient does not consent to being euthanized. She asks you to keep her alive as long as possible.

What would the Utilitarian recommend that you do?

UTILITARIANISM: EXAMPLES



Suppose that you are a doctor on a remote island community. Nobody is monitoring you. No one will remember what you do.

Case 3:

You have enough blood to save either Arden or Baldwin, but not both. Arden is younger, happier, and healthier than Baldwin. Arden has a large family and many friends. Baldwin doesn't.

What would the Utilitarian recommend that you do?

UTILITARIANISM: EXAMPLES



Suppose that you are a doctor on a remote island community. Nobody is monitoring you. No one will remember what you do.

Case 4:

Same as before, except that the blood originally belonged to Baldwin. They asked you to hold on to it for them, and made you promise that you wouldn't give it to someone else.

What would the Utilitarian recommend that you do?

UTILITARIANISM: EXAMPLES



Suppose that you are a doctor working at Scripps Mercy hospital.

Case 5 - 8:

Same as before, except that you work at a hospital. People are monitoring what you do.

What would the Utilitarian recommend that you do?

UTILITARIANISM: EXAMPLES



Trump:

"WE CANNOT LET THE CURE BE WORSE THAN THE PROBLEM ITSELF."

How would a Utilitarian think about this?



QUESTIONS?

