

NATURAL LAW  
 Lecture 1  
 9-27-16  
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Ethical Theories – Interconnections between Ethics, Anthropology, Epistemology, and Metaphysics

<p>Revealed religion (Christian Scriptures)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Torah: Commandments of the Old Law, Statutes, Ceremonial Precepts</li> <li>– New Testament: the love commandments of Christ</li> <li>– the Beatitudes, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit; infused virtues</li> <li>– grace: supernatural, actual</li> </ul>	<p>The human person is made in the image and according to the likeness of God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Augustinian model: triadic models, e.g., memory, understanding and will</li> <li>– Cappadocian model: the Father’s generosity, the Son’s receptivity and gratitude, the Holy Spirit’s delight and joy (all free and unconditioned)</li> </ul>	<p>God is other than the created cosmos.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– God as transcendent Creator, infinite in power, knowledge, love; creatures as the vestiges of God (effects → cause)</li> <li>– freedom and responsibility are found in human beings/angels by virtue of the spiritual dimension of their natures</li> </ul>
<p>Deontology (e.g., Kant)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the supremacy of reason and freedom</li> <li>– autonomy vs. heteronomy</li> <li>– the categorical imperative: act only in such a way that one can universalize the maxim one proposes for oneself</li> <li>– 4 formulations of categorical imperative</li> <li>– one may never treat a person only as a mere means to one’s own end</li> </ul>	<p>Human person: dignity that comes from having a self-legislative reason that maintains its dignity only by acting autonomously in accord with the demands of reason and freedom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– critique of pure reason; construction of knowledge of the phenomenal order with categories of the understanding</li> <li>– critique of practical reason/judgment</li> </ul>	<p>There is no way to answer the question of the existence of God by speculative reason; one may, however, postulate the existence of God as a postulate of practical reason.</p> <p>Metaphysics as critical epistemology; critique of the ideas of world, self, freedom.</p>
<p>Utilitarianism (e.g., Bentham, Mill)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Greatest Happiness Principle: the action should be done that will maximize pleasure (benefits) and minimize pain (burdens) for the greatest number</li> <li>– calculus of values and disvalues</li> <li>– act utilitarianism: effects of <i>this action</i></li> <li>– rule utilitarianism: effects of <i>such an action</i></li> </ul>	<p>The human being as a pleasure-loving and pain-avoiding animal. Instrumental view of reason as capable of weighing the likely consequences of a course of action for benefits and burdens, pains and pleasures, intensity, duration, quality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– decisions with social impact should be done out of rational self-interest</li> </ul>	<p>Materialist metaphysics.</p> <p>Human beings as one kind of beings among many. Reason makes them more powerful than other kinds of being; no intrinsic moral dignity.</p> <p>Supernatural religion is untrue, but the Social Gospel can serve the purposes of social peace and prosperity.</p>

<p>Social Contract Theory (e.g., Locke, Jefferson, Rousseau)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Inalienable natural rights</li> <li>– mythical/actual origin of social contract</li> <li>– government originates in the surrender of the right to punish wrong-doers to a neutral authority, so as to enjoy more securely the possession of other rights</li> <li>– libertarian and communitarian versions</li> </ul>	<p>Human beings by nature have inherent natural rights, e.g., the right to life, liberty, the pursuit of property, the pursuit of happiness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the power of reason allows people to make compacts that constitute societies and establish governments</li> <li>– freedom through ordered liberty</li> </ul>	<p>Political philosophy is primary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the political sphere is created by human decision.</li> <li>– Sometimes the act of creation of the political sphere is within historical memory (e.g., the Magna Carta, the Declaration of Independence), but when unavailable the myth of the state of nature replaces the creation story of Genesis.</li> </ul>
<p>Natural Moral Law (e.g., Aquinas)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the Divine Lawgiver created human nature, including moral norms that human reason can discover</li> <li>– the good is to be sought and done, evil to be shunned and avoided</li> <li>– secondary precepts: some pertaining to all beings, some to all animals, some unique to human person</li> </ul>	<p>Theological anthropology: the human person as made in the image and according to likeness of God; the problem of original sin; the remedies of the grace of Christ</p> <p>Philosophical anthropology: hylomorphic unity of body and soul; material and immaterial powers of the soul to know and choose; intrinsic teleology</p>	<p>God created a cosmos of diverse natures, including human nature with its powers of reason and will.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– nature: the internal principle governing the structures, development, and activities typical of each kind</li> <li>– hylomorphic unity of suitable matter and substantial form; activities point back to powers, seated in a nature.</li> </ul>
<p>Virtue Ethics (e.g., Aristotle, MacIntyre)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– virtue as a disposition to choose the mean between extremes of excess and deficiency along the continuum of passions and circumstances of action, as a person of right reason would do.</li> </ul>	<p>The person as a rational animal and as a political animal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– a hylomorphic union of soul (substantial form) and body (suitable matter)</li> <li>– focus on virtue (<i>arete</i>, excellence) at one's proper function</li> </ul>	<p>Metaphysics of eternal essences, instantiated in time as existing individuals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– metaphysics of potency and act</li> <li>– philosophy of nature: matter and form, substance and accidents</li> </ul>