

BUSINESS META-ETHICS: AN ANALYSIS OF TWO THEORIES

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Abstract: The main purpose of this paper is to defend traditional ethical theory (utilitarianism and deontology) for its application in business against a more recent model consisting of utility, rights, and justice. This is done in three parts: First, we provide a conceptual argument for the superiority of the traditional model; second, we demonstrate these points through an examination of three short cases; and third, we argue for the capability of the traditional model to account for universals and particulars in ethics.

A lingering difficulty in the field of business ethics is the acquisition of a stable theoretical base. The feeling one gets from the literature (texts, articles, books) is that of a theoretical "free-for-all" where eclecticism seems to dominate over the need for focus and the securing of a common foundation. The presentation of ethical theory in the literature of the field is almost unpredictable, although Kantian deontology and utilitarianism seem to be hard to ignore. Many authors also include such perspectives as egoism, virtue theory, theories of justice, theories of rights, universalism, ethical relativism, an ethic of caring, and so on. The theoretical foundations of business ethics, therefore, are not secure; the dominant interest in the field seems inclined toward building a diversity of perspectives, as opposed to identifying a common core of theory.

Eclecticism in ethical theory is easy to justify: Human beings are complex and multi-faceted creatures. No one theory or collection of selected theories will prove comprehensive, as several authors shown (Hoffman, 1984, p. 263; Derry & Green, 1989, pp. 531-2; Donaldson, 1992; Pamental, 1991, pp. 387-9).

On the other hand, even though a comprehensive understanding of human behavior would profit from the insights of most perspectives, this does not mean that all perspectives are of equal theoretical status. Appealing to the analogy of combustion engines might help: Automobile engines have benefited from increasing complexity and refinement over the last century, but decisions regarding their fundamental design (piston, turbine, electric, etc.) came early. Adjustments were made over the years without altering the fundamental functional commitment. Likewise, we believe that ethical theory in business needs to make some fundamental decisions regarding the basic structure of its enterprise—decisions which may actually facilitate the understanding of human behavior rather than impede it.

The general purpose of this paper is to focus on and assess two proposals regarding the dominant ethical theories for business managers. One is the traditional ethical dualism of Kantian deontology and utilitarianism, mentioned

above. (Whether we are actually talking here about deontology or formalism or absolutism and utilitarianism or consequentialism or proportionalism, etc. is an important question which can probably be postponed for the purpose of this paper.) For nearly two hundred years, advocates and defenders of these two theories have contested the adequacy of their respective views. Recent research sees these two theories as complementary rather than competing and suggests that, taken together, Kantian deontology and utilitarianism provide the ideals toward which much of decision making strives (Nozick, 1981, p. 494; Brady, 1985; Cody & Lynn, 1992, p. 6). This paper will refer to this perspective as the "DU Model."

A second, more recent, proposal has also become important in the literature over the past ten years or so. This is the "utility-rights-justice model" of managerial decision making (hereafter, the "URJ Model"). It can be seen as competing with the DU Model for attention in the field of business ethics. It basically states that three (not two) categories of requirements must be satisfied to secure complete coverage of the ethical terrain in business decision making: questions of utility, questions of individual rights, and questions of justice.

The specific aim of this paper is to argue for the priority of the traditional DU Model. The argument proceeds in two ways: First, we argue that the URJ Model is not parsimonious: it can be collapsed into the simpler DU Model without loss of explanatory power. Second, we examine two or three practical cases to demonstrate the practical superiority of the DU Model. Third, we call attention to the fundamental philosophical distinction between universals and particulars and argue that the DU Model is an ethical reflection of this long-standing metaphysical dualism.

The "DU Model"

Traditionally, deontology and utilitarianism are seen as competing theories of ethics, each claiming to be more adequate than the other for accounting for our moral intuitions. And they are frequently cited as the dominant theories for application in business ethics, although some writers emphasize the importance of one or the other. Etzioni (1988), for example, points out the excessive utilitarian bias of economic activity and calls for a revival of the deontological perspective.

Recently, a few writers are proposing that these theories are much more useful, from a practical point of view, if seen as complementing each other instead of competing with each other. Pastin (1986), for example, refers to these two views as "rule ethics" and "end-point ethics" and includes both in his toolbox for handling the hard problems of management.

In 1985 Brady proposed a "Janus-Headed" relationship of deontology and utilitarianism. He claimed that these theories of decision making were complementary and, taken together, constituted a reasonably comprehensive model of managerial decision making. In 1987 he further elaborated this model by showing how a manager's ability to make exceptions to rules only when appropriate depended on a sound understanding of managerial principles derived from deontological and utilitarian ethical theories.

More recently, Cody and Lynn (1992) explicate this idea in their book *Honest Government*:

"At the risk of oversimplifying the work of philosophers, ...[managerial] ethics are formed by the clash of two basic viewpoints: utilitarianism versus deontological. The utilitarian believes that the end sought (e.g. efficiency, economy) justifies the means to that end. The deontologist believes that certain absolute principles (e.g. honesty) should be obeyed, regardless of the consequences. In real life, none of us is exclusively utilitarian or deontological. Our personal values reflect a mix of these viewpoints, depending on the issue. Sometimes we act solely as a matter of principle (deontological) and sometimes we act practically (utilitarian). Frequently, our ethical choices are explained by a compromise between the two" (Cody & Lynn, 1992, p. 6)

They go on to argue that successful managers do not wholly rely on either view but try to balance the influences of each in the managing of their organizations.

So, the DU Model basically asserts that Kantian deontology and utilitarianism provide complementary perspectives on ethical decision making that, taken together, establish a foundation for ethical decision making in management.

The "Utility-Rights-Justice Model"

The URJ Model also has a history. It begins with an article by Cavanagh, et.al. (1981), which attempted to respond to the need to evaluate political behavior in organizations from an ethical point of view. To do so, they constructed a decision procedure which incorporated the basic elements of three types of moral theories: utility, rights, and justice. By combining the prescriptive elements of these types of theories in a decision tree, they avoided the inadequacies of any single theory and secured a comprehensive ethical decision procedure for evaluating the ethics of organizational politics. They urged that this model "be applied to political uses of power in organizations" (Cavanagh, et.al., p. 363).

Two years later, Velasquez incorporated this model into his well-received textbook *Business Ethics: Concepts and Cases* (Prentice-Hall, 1982). There he argued that the ethical philosophy of Immanuel Kant supplied "a more satisfactory foundation for moral rights" (1982, p. 65), and he provided a short discussion of Kant's "categorical imperative" in connection with this claim. In 1983, the same three authors published a piece using a similar model in *Organizational Dynamics*.

During this last decade, the model proposed in these works has had considerable influence. Their model has been cited in more than two dozen subsequent works, some of which employ the elements of their model for furthering the empirical investigation of decision making in organizations. Fritzsche and Becker, for example, use the URJ Model as a framework for analyzing responses of managers to several vignettes (1984, 167). Boal and Peery (1985) use the model to explain the results of a study of individuals' cognitive map of the notion of corporate social responsibility. Many other authors urge that this model be used for a variety of research purposes: to evaluate the ethical status of attempts to influence and engender commitment (Schwenk, 1986), to investigate the ethical orientations of self-reported whistleblowers (Dozier & Mideli, 1985), to

assess the ethics of diadic communications (Drake and Moberg, 1986), to evaluate the manner in which knowledge is used (Duncan, 1986), and so on.

The URJ Model has even been adopted by Arthur Anderson & Company in its training of now more than one thousand professors of business in more than three hundred universities around the country (Arthur Anderson & Co, 1992).

Argument for the Superiority of the DU Model

Seldom do contributions in the field of business ethics have such influence. Nevertheless, the URJ Model may be guilty of a curious oversight: It neglects to mention the deontological theory of Immanuel Kant. It does mention Kant as contributing to the historical development of theories of rights, although it relies upon only one of Kant's lesser known works *The Metaphysical Elements of Justice* (1797). Of far greater importance to the development of ethical theory are three of Kant's earlier works *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), and *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797). Why Kant would be cited for an obscure work on human rights but not cited for his much more important work in deontology is hard to understand. At best, this view implies that Kantian ethics can be reduced to a theory of rights, a growing misperception which we take up later.

Their claim, then, that "Work in the field of normative ethics during this century has evolved from three basic kinds of moral theories: utilitarian theories..., theories of rights..., and theories of justice...." (1981, p. 365) seems flawed. Theories of moral duty (deontology) have also produced considerable attention in this century and would include such writers as W. D. Ross (1930), A. C. Ewing (1953), and H. A. Prichard (1949)—perhaps even John Rawls (1971). Therefore, any comprehensive ethical schema for managerial decision making must include theories of moral duty at its base.

Does this mean, then, that to be comprehensive the URJ Model must include a fourth element—moral duties? Perhaps. In fact, Beauchamp and Bowie (1983) provide a discussion of exactly these four theories in their text *Ethical Theory and Business*, 3rd. Ed. But an alternative option is to show how the DU Model captures most that is of interest in the URJ Model (or even the URJD Model!). This will be done below in two steps:

- (1) show how issues of individual rights and duties are subsumed under Kantian deontological ethical theory, and
- (2) demonstrate how issues of justice are reducible to a tension between utilitarianism and Kantian deontological ethical theory.

What remains is a simple but highly useful set of two complementary ethical theories (utility and deontology) that is consistent with much of the development of ethical theory in this century.

Merging Discussions of Rights and Duties

On the surface, at least, it seems sensible to merge matters of rights and duties. On one level they are reciprocal: Where one has a right, others have duties, and vice-versa. But this is to trivialize the distinction (Selznick, 1987, p. 454).

Beyond this, we remind ourselves that all alleged rights and duties are subject to moral evaluation. Kant, for example, said that all rights derive from moral duties:

“.. [We] know our own freedom (from which all moral laws and hence all rights as well as duties are derived) only through the moral imperative, which is a proposition commanding duties: the capacity to obligate others to a duty, that is, the concept of a right, can be subsequently derived from this imperative” (1797, p. 45).

According to Kant, ethically speaking, a right is better thought of as a claim based on other's duties. Simon Weil said something similar in her book *The Need for Roots*:

“The notion of obligations comes before that of rights, which is subordinate and relative to the former. A right is not effectual by itself, but only in relation to the obligation to which it corresponds, the effective exercise of a right springing not from the individual who possesses it, but from other men who consider themselves as being under a certain obligation toward him” (1979, p. 3).

Josiah Royce put the same point this way: “...rights which are not determined by my loyalty are vain pretence” (1908, p. 144).

Last, a contemporary British philosopher, John Finnis, agrees that “when we come to explain the requirements of justice...we find that there is reason for treating the concept of duty, obligation, or requirement as having a more strategic explanatory role than the concept of rights” (1980, p. 210).

Thus, legal rights and duties are also moral if they conform to the demands of deontological ethical theory—a theory of moral duties. Therefore, the moral status of all rights and duties are subject to a single moral criterion—moral duty, or what Kant calls the “moral imperative.” Therefore, the advantage of speaking of duties rather than rights is that, as Kant argues, duties are more strategically important in theory development. Duties might include not only duties to each other (rights), but also duties to oneself, the family, the community, and the environment; including, perhaps, even duties to non-human life and natural objects.

Some have argued that there are certain moral duties which cannot be translated into someone's rights. For example, one's duty to pay taxes does not translate immediately into someone else's entitlements. The duty to pay taxes is still a duty with or without the existence of any particular entitlements or rights. Similarly, one's duty toward the environment does not imply that either the environment itself or any person has corresponding rights. At least some would argue that we have duties toward our environment regardless of the consequences for human interests. And Kant would add that even where one's moral duties *can* be translated into corresponding rights of another, the notion of moral duties is logically prior: We may have moral obligations or duties which exist independent of any individual's rights, but we have no rights that do not also obligate others to act in observance of those rights. The notion of moral duty seems more comprehensive or more strategic than the notion of an individual right.

This is not to say that the notion of individual right is an unimportant concept in ethics. On the contrary, it is very important, and we see it frequently used almost interchangeably with the concept of correlated moral duties. Furthermore, some respected writers have articulated forceful arguments that challenge our position on this issue (Donaldson, 1992, pp. 278-9; Werhane, 1985, pp. 14-16). Nevertheless, for the reasons stated above we hold the notion of moral duty to be more fundamental and of more strategic importance in ethical theory than the notion of individual right.

Reducing Justice Prescriptions to Deontology and Utility

The authors of the URJ Model break down questions of justice into three types of moral prescriptions: (1) distribution rules, (2) principles of administering rules, and (3) compensation norms (Cavanagh, et al., 1981, 366). They argue that distributions should not be based on arbitrary or irrelevant characteristics and that organizational rules should be clearly stated and consistently and impartially enforced. Further, people should not be held responsible for things they cannot control. Last, if people are injured, their injuries should be compensated for by those responsible for the injuries.

This is a fairly abbreviated restatement of their position, and we do not argue with the substance of any of it. Instead, we think the same things are implied by existing ethical theories and need no separate theories of justice to elaborate their tenets.

From the utilitarian perspective, for example, the insistence that systems of distribution and administrative process be impartial, consistent, and non-arbitrary can be explained in terms of the individual and social benefit derived under such conditions. More arbitrary arrangements would tend toward private exploitation, uncertainty, and even chaos. Likewise, the enforcement of compensation norms can have both preventative and rehabilitative effects; it explains why we generally require compensation from the offending party and not from some other source. In short, it is possible to account for just principles and procedures on utilitarian grounds alone.

But deontological ethics also claims to provide a foundation for principles of justice. To act arbitrarily or differentiate for merely personal (or inadequate) reasons is at least inconsistent, and from a Kantian point of view is "unprincipled." Kantian deontology requires that anyone in similar circumstances do the same thing. Sometimes this allows for personal friendships and commitments; but in most administrative circumstances, such behavior would be regarded as arbitrary and capricious—a violation of duty, a failure to act on principle. Consistency, impartiality, and responsibility are all hallmarks of Kantian ethics.

Even critics of traditional ethical theory agree that questions of justice are well attended to by deontologists and utilitarians; in fact, a common criticism is that these two traditional theories pay excessive attention to issues of justice to the exclusion of other important matters. Michael Sandel attacks what he calls "deontological liberalism" for establishing "the primacy of justice among moral and political ideals" (Sandel, 1982, p. 1). Carol Gilligan (1982) contrasts an

ethics of care with an ethics of justice and argues that modern ethical theory (deontology and utilitarianism) pursue the latter to the exclusion of the former. Michael Stocker adds that this traditional orientation towards matters of duty, obligation, and justice lead to a form of "moral schizophrenia" (1976). In short, even the critics of traditional ethical theory are quick to point out its focus on issues of justice.

There may, indeed, be more to questions of justice generally than is contained in this list. For example, several authors have pointed out that the nature of justice depends on the context. Issues of distribution, process and compensation are different in a business from what they are in a family or at church (Walzer, 1983; Schwartz, 1986). But if we restrict our examination to administrative justice, then perhaps the three categories listed above are not unreasonable.

So, to summarize so far, although the URJ Model is a step in the right direction in the sense that it attempts to produce a practical template for managerial decision making, it suffers from defective theory: First, it is incomplete: it ignores historical deontological theories and is unable to explain certain moral duties. Second, it is not parsimonious: it requires three categories of explanation when ultimately only two are necessary

So, in place of the URJ Model, we propose that the most defensible theoretical foundation for practical decision making in business ethics is the traditional dichotomy between utilitarianism and Kantian deontology.

An Illustration in Three Short Cases

The above arguments can be made more convincing with examples. Below, we provide three short cases which demonstrate the explanatory power of the DU Model.

1. Political Clout

Consider the case of two proposals competing for funding which are of equal merit, but one party wins the grant through some minor politicking (Cavanagh, et.al., p. 369). To the loser, the decision certainly seems unjust, and Cavanagh et.al. argue that principles of justice are essential for articulating our moral intuitions regarding this case.

Our moral intuitions tell us that the decision makers here are in a bind: They need to select a proposal on the basis of merit alone but are unable to do so since both proposals are equally meritorious. Unlikely as this scenario may be, let's give it what it asks for: no decisive utilitarian criterion—no way of differentiating between the proposals on the basis of personal or organizational interests. At this point we might expect the dilemma to be resolved procedurally, i.e. a random choice (toss of a coin) which treats both applicants equally so far as the choice procedure is concerned. Instead, one applicant applies effective pressure and succeeds in influencing the choice.

From the utilitarian standpoint, what the decision makers did *in the short term* cannot be assailed: Either proposal would have satisfied organizational and personal interests equally. However, what they did was wrong *in the long term*

because it sets a bad precedent: it may affect attitudes incrementally and encourages political behaviors that may jeopardize the integrity of the decision making process in future cases.

From the standpoint of deontological ethics, the conclusion is the same although the rationale is different. Deontological ethics specifies the duty of the committee to be procedurally fair: they are required to treat both proposals the same and assess their comparative worth on the basis of merit alone. If personal need or interest of the applicants were a relevant factor, the committee should have inquired about both applicants' needs. They did not. Therefore, their willingness to allow individual politicking to influence their decision was not universalizable.

If an impartial assessment of the relative merit of the two proposals revealed no discernable advantages of one over the other, a procedurally fair way to proceed would have been to flip a coin. This is not to say that it would be inappropriate to decide between proposals of otherwise equal merit on the basis of personal need, but then assessment would be utilitarian. The deontological requirement is simply that personal interest or need of both proposals' authors be reviewed.

So, the DU Model provides a simple and adequate analysis of this case, without appealing to separate theories of justice.

2. *Letter of Recommendation*

Managers are commonly faced with the predicament of writing a letter of recommendation for a problem employee. On the one hand, one wants to be honest; on the other, it would be nice to facilitate the employee's voluntary exit. What does one do?

First, let's look at this case from the perspective of the URJ Model. The question of utility probably urges a positive letter. The employee's exit would be of great benefit to one's own organization, and although the employee might succeed no better at the new location, there is enough uncertainty to prevent the switch of jobs from being a utilitarian wash: A new job in a new company might actually change one's performance.

From the perspective of rights, it's hard to say whether the potential new employer has a right to expect an honest appraisal or not. Of course, if it is the present employer's moral duty to be honest, then the new employer might have a concomitant right to expect honesty, but that would be based on deontological considerations and not simply on independently existing rights of some sort. In fact, some have argued that bluffing is an accepted and normal part of business activity. In that case, whether any rights are violated by writing a positive recommendation depends on the norms in the industry.

Justice does not seem to be at issue in this case.

By contrast with the URJ Model, the DU Model does a better job. As indicated above, the crucial factor is moral duty—in this case, the duty to be honest. Indeed, it is the existence of this possible moral duty to write an honest recommendation which, when juxtaposed against the utilitarian value of a bluff, that

accounts for the moral dilemma managers frequently feel in situations like this. This is especially true if one has reason to believe that the employee might, indeed, profit from a change of scenery and produce a win-win scenario for everybody concerned. A totally honest recommendation might not produce the best results.

3. *Making an Offer*

Finally, let's look at a case where justice is the primary issue. Suppose a position opens up in a firm, and the supervisor responsible to fill the position knows exactly the right person for the job, who happens at the moment to be available. But the company's policy has been to announce and publicize all openings, giving persons in and out of the company a chance to apply. Should the manager waste time by going through the usual search process, possibly losing the person in the meantime to competitors, or should she make an exception to company policy in this case and make an offer?

Utilitarian thinking would recommend making the offer. On the basis of all available information, this is the best person for the job. A wider and more extended search is unlikely to turn up a better candidate. Whether it did or did not, the search process is not cost-free. An announcement and search costs time and money; the possibility of securing a compensating benefit by finding a better candidate is low. Therefore, utilitarian thinking recommends making the offer.

This ignores company policy, of course. And one of the supervisor's duties is to abide by company policy. And this duty springs from an original perceived duty on the part of the company at least to notify its own employees of openings they might want to apply for. This policy preserves a reputation of impartiality for the firm and hopes to avoid charges of favoritism from those who might see themselves as being ignored by those higher up. Therefore, a deontological approach would probably recommend opening the search to other candidates, risking the loss of an excellent choice.

An alternative account of this dilemma might construe the original motivation for the policy as utilitarian: As a general rule, the company won't know who the better candidates are unless they announce the opening. In that case, there is no dilemma. One simply suspends policy when it is clear that the same end can be achieved without the expense of a search. But sometimes in situations like this, the dilemma is clearly felt. And that can only be explained in terms of the force of moral duty in conflict with corporate utility.

Further discussion of this case might reveal other considerations that would swing the decision one way or the other, but on the face of things the supervisor faces a genuine ethical dilemma. The important point here is that the URJ Model has a more difficult time accounting for the intuitive force of the dilemma than the DU Model. The dilemma arises because of the conflict of duty with utility, for which the addition of a third category (justice) is superfluous. Countless similar examples have been discussed in the philosophical literature relating to the confrontation between deontological and utilitarian ethics. The URJ Model can appeal to conflicts between utility and rights or justice, but it cannot appeal to one's sense of managerial duty.

Universals and Particulars in Ethics

William James once wrote,

"There is very little difference between once man and another, but what differences there are are very important" (1919, pp. 256-7).

In philosophical discussions of metaphysics, the question of the ontological status of universals and particulars has been central for at least two thousand years. But if this is an important question for metaphysics, neither can it be ignored in ethical theory. James suggests above that it's important to understand both the ways in which human beings are alike as well as the ways in which each individual is different. Attending to one while excluding the other generates an inferior ethic: an abstract, universalistic ethic on the one hand, or a fragmented, individualistic ethic on the other.

This ethical debate has revived during the past decade as scholars have shown a renewed interest in the conflict of universals and particulars in ethics (Gewirth, 1988; Adler, 1989; Flanagan & Adler, 1983; Blum, 1988; Brink, 1986). We cannot review this debate in detail; that would require another paper. But we do want to sketch in broad strokes how the DU Model might constitute one way of construing the universal-particular debate in ethical theory.

In brief, we argue that deontological ethics reflects the presumption that all ethical prescriptions can be expressed as universal obligations. (At least as this is the ideal.) Utilitarianism, by contrast, is more of a situational ethic and is much more comfortable with idiosyncratic particulars, especially when they are elements of consequence. A brief defense of these view follows below.

Deontology: Universalism in Ethics

Kant repeatedly reminded us that ethical behavior should be unconditional, i.e. it should be free from the influence or contamination of individual preferences or desires (1785). Kant sought an ethics of principle. He felt this could be achieved through the discovery of universal obligations, or the moral law. The greatest threat to the universalizability of some potential ethical principle was the "significant particular" which violated the rule's universality and called for its qualification. What the Kantian hopes for, instead, is a small set of clear, simple, and precise rules of moral behavior—the moral law.

To a Kantian, those principles are the most important that apply with the widest possible scope. That is, they do not differentiate among human beings at all; they resist exception. Rough examples might include such principles as "Always tell the truth," "Do not kill," and so on. In short, they are universal, impartial: as they are stated, no particular individual or situational characteristics compromise their universality of application. (Exceptions might be easy to think of, but they are mentioned here as illustrations of the deontological ideal.) Such principles attempt to capture the ways in which all human beings are expected to act alike. As Selznick says, "...Our deepest and most important obligations flow from identity and relatedness...." (1987, p. 451).

Utilitarianism: Particularity in Ethics

It seems to be an historical accident that "utilitarian" has come to mean "of common usefulness." In this sense, "utilitarian" is often contrasted with "extravagant" or "wasteful," implying that people share some ideas about priorities for securing happiness (e.g. buying a new refrigerator before buying a new stereo system: The former represents a preference more common to human beings, while the latter is a more idiosyncratic preference.).

In this century, utilitarianism has also tended to ignore important differences in values by insisting on comparing all interests on a single scale. Right or wrong, there is certainly a lot of universalism built into utilitarianism as we have come to know it.

But this need not have been the case. There is plenty of room for idiosyncrasy and particularity in one's quest to secure the greatest good for the greatest number. Critics have been quick to point out, however, that particularity in ethics seems incompatible with traditional ethical theory, including utilitarianism. Sometimes we do things for people, not because we feel moral obligation, but because of a personal relationship. Thus, thinking of one's care and compassion for a close friend as a moral obligation "is one thought too many" (Williams, 1981, p. 18; See also Stocker, 1976). On the other hand, to show compassion or care when one is in a position to do so is not inconsistent with utilitarianism, either: At small cost, one can make another feel much better just by showing compassion for their situation. The pursuit and realization of merely personal projects can be an important good which the utilitarian would hope to maximize (Brink, 1986, p. 437).

Unlike schools of fish or clouds of gnats, human society is more than the mere aggregation of undifferentiated individuals. Our idiosyncracies, our cares, our personal attachments, are important; and their pursuit and realization can amount to great good. Unless such particulars are attended to, utilitarian thinking cannot be successful. Ultimately, the achieving of the greatest good for the greatest number requires the arranging of individual wants and needs with other individuals' talents and abilities. John Rawls has described what such an achievement might look like:

"Consider a group of musicians everyone of whom could have trained himself to play equally well as the others any instrument in the orchestra, but who each have by a kind of tacit agreement set out to perfect their skills on the one they have chosen so as to realize the powers of all in the joint performances" (1974, p. 524n)

Utilitarianism requires that we attend to particularities of human living lest we fail to accomplish good ends. Treating all persons alike and ignoring particular differences might be a tendency of public policy analysis, but it makes bad public policy.

Therefore, utilitarian ethics can be regarded as complementing deontological ethics by attending to the moral significance of particulars while the deontologists search for universals. Neither task is easy, and each displays tendencies to immitate the other: Instead of simply identifying our highest ideals and leaving

it at that, the deontologist qualifies these principles with exception after exception, resulting in complex and inelegant systems of rules. And instead of promoting the appreciation of individual and community differences, the utilitarian frequently is pressed to advocate a public policy which ignores many of these particular differences that enrich our lives. These two positions are most vulnerable, but also most useful, as contrasting theories of ethics which illustrate universals and particulars in moral life.

Conclusion

Besides the explanatory advantages of the DU Model enumerated in this paper, there are two additional advantages to mention. The first is that the traditional model of utilitarian and deontological ethics provides a genuine theory and lays a secure foundation for empirical work in the field of ethical decision making. Assuming that each view represents a distinct psychological approach to ethical analysis, researchers might develop psychometric instruments to explore the psychological contrasts between the two ethical positions. Furthermore, unlike the URJ Model, the DU Model asserts a particular kind of relation to hold among the two major explanatory variables—one of balance or complementarity. Researchers could explore this claim and see if these two forms of reasoning are related constructs measured on a single scale or if they are independent constructs. At least some empirical work can proceed under the security of a stable theoretical base.

Second, the DU Model has an interesting biproduct. One possible advantage of characterizing Kant's universalizability requirement as "attending to ethical universals" is that it facilitates the recognition of the social nature of Kantian ethics. While ethical judgment based on differentiating among individuals focuses on individuality, judgment based on identifying points of commonality emphasizes sociality or affinity. In a real sense, deontological ethics is made possible by the general recognition among individuals of ethically relevant similarities, or by the social acceptance of governing principles or ideals. Therefore, to the degree that deontological ethics expresses an identifying function in moral discourse, we might argue that the ground of this phenomenon is society itself (Crittendon, 1993). "Autonomy" is not synonymous with "individuality."

A "more social Kant" will come as welcome news to those who despair over the extreme individualism of neoclassical economics and see the need for grounding social responsibility in deontological theory (Etzioni, 1988). As yet, however, no such social perspective on Kant exists, to our knowledge; but the theory presented here opens the door for precisely such a development.

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