

A Brief History of Philosophy

(Being a compilation of student research, gently edited by Stephen Hicks, Rockford College)

Is philosophy a waist of time?

Ethical debates have been around for a long time, but nobody seems to have any answers. Ethics are very important. Basically, what you do with your life comes down to your personal ethics. For the world to be good means having strong Altruistic people to help the society survive in this doggy dog world.

To Socrates, having a good life meant dying. Socrates was completely opposed to the Sophists. Not only did the Sophists not have reasons, they also did not have reasons. Sophists felt that there were no real reasons.

For Aristotle, the virtuous person can be known as temperate, someone who is under complete control. Aristotle thinks the Principle of Noncontradiction is an axiom is because it is one.

The existence of God is questionable since evil does have some good points to make. John Hick rebukes the concept that God would not allow suffering if he existed in the third paragraph of his essay. Because of evil there is said to be another force in the universe, a dark force. His name is Satan.

Mysticism is the direct and immediate experience of the sacred.

In feudal times, jobs were passed on from fathers to sons. For example, if your father was a priest, you would probably become a priest too.

Priests vow poverty and while money isn't everything a priest should be able to have a little of life's enjoyments just like every other human being. Priests also take the vow of celibacy. On the conventional view, sex without the possibility of recreation is immoral. Priests want to sustain themselves from sex so they can have eternal childhood in the Lord's eyes. One thing religions teach is that you should pray regularly.

Basically, we need to decide what's best for society as a whole. That is the purpose of laws. Some states have laws that if broken cause one to be a criminal. Power definitely corrupts; both power and corruption are all too often abused.

In our country, the Declaration of Independence sets the basic rights and laws. Some people have the right to liberty, but are unable to exercise it. Shall I go against the laws put forth by my four fathers, who wrote, "All men are entitled to certain unalienable rights"?

Capital punishment is the death penalty for a crime that dates back to the beginning of civilization. Some people believe in capital punishment because of the "eye for an eye" theory: for instance, if you kill me, I should be able to kill you. Capital punishment is mostly about whether persons who have been executed will commit further offenses if and when released. Cruel and unusual punishment is included in the Constitution. But Capital Punishment violates the Eighth Amendment because it makes people feel like they are less of a person.

Justice is really a double bladed sword: at times it is a warm blanket keeping you safe and at other times an uncontrollable juggernaut ready to mow you over.

In modern times, Utilitarianism is the doctrine that we should all strive to please our neighbors. John Stuart Mill said that even if what is being said is true, it is still wrong to censor it. Of course, we cannot take it for granted that all of Mill's assumptions are true.

According to Freud, the child has lust during the breast-feeding stage. Eventually his mother stops, and his lust is suppressed until his adultery stage.

Marx says the bourgeois who employ the workers can and do enslave the proletariat workers. So Marx promoted socialism which operates the production of products produced by the society. Marx believed socialism was the best form of government for the world after World War II. Communist Russia failed because of Mises and Hayek's lack of knowledge. Socialism is an ideal, but come on now! Let's be realistic!

Against Marx, Rand advocates free enterprise and selfishness. The rich are able to create new jobs and hand them out to the poor, which takes many poor people out of poverty and also gives the rich something to do. She said that minimum wages increases raise the cost of labor, so workers may lose their fringe benefits. But her philosophy is sort of controversial, in a sense. She commits the fallacy of hoc pro hoc.

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