

1. What is the Classical Liberal notion of the self?
2. What is the Narrative account of the self?
3. Define Communitarianism
4. **List and explain the three types of moral obligations mentioned in the video.**
5. **Give an example where a natural duty conflicts with a duty of solidarity.**
6. **Give an example where a voluntary duty conflicts with a duty of solidarity.**
7. **Give an example where two duties of solidarity conflict.**

Aristotle – to figure out rights we need to figure out what the purpose of the state is. The purpose of the state is enable citizens to practice and be virtuous, which is happiness.

Kant- disagrees. The state is an instrument for people to decide what the good life is for themselves – this is freedom. Freedom is acting autonomously. Capable of choosing my own ends. As free moral person we are not bound by obligations that we have not chosen for ourselves – historically, the collective.

Communitarian says we commonly recognize obligations that are not traced to consent or choosing. As encumbered selves we are born into a complex system of relations with other people and are born with obligations and responsibilities.

Liberal account of self - Modern classical liberalism (Kant, Locke, Rawls) - we are unencumbered selves, autonomous individuals, endowed with reason, and incur moral and political obligations through consent, social contract, agree to come together and form a society which respects rights and freedoms to pursue the ends we choose. (10 key points of classical liberalism video.)

Vs.

Narrative account of self , Encumberd Self - Alisdair MacIntyre (Communitarian, Virtue Theorist)–, You only know who a person is when you know their story – where they are from, what tribe they belong to, who their parents are. We inherit a variety of debts and obligations. This is the moral starting point. We come encumbered with history and tradition of communities we belong to. The story of your life is the story of your group, its history. The Self cannot be detached from its particular ties to history and community. In an ontological sense, the community is prior to the individual. Language is prior to us and language is social. 222

Categories of Moral Responsibility

Natural duties – Universal, don't require consent

Voluntary obligations – Particular - promises, contracts – requires consent

Obligations of solidarity – particular – does not require consent. (Communitarian)

Examples of obligations of solidarity

National Apologies

Germany's apology to the Jews

Calls for Japan to apologize for comfort women during WWII

Australia's apology to aborigines for taking babies away from mothers.

Reagan's apology for Japanese Internment camps.

American apology, reparations to African Americans for slavery.

Family – parents owe their kids, kids have obligations to their parents. No consent.

Nation - Patriotism – Love of country. Obligations to one another that go beyond the duties we have to people in other countries, that cannot be reduced to or analyzed in terms of consent or reciprocation.– French Resistance example. Bomber pilot. Welfare vs. Foreign Aid. Immigration and Borders. (Franklin USA vs. Franklin Mexico) Buy American.

Patriotism is anti-Kantian, mere prejudice. - Peter Singer says I should take my extra money and send it to the Sudan to save a child's life, instead of using it to pay for my kid's violin lessons or give it to a charity in my own country. A Kantian might agree. A Communitarian would not. We have more obligations to our closer community of which we are a part. Patriotism is opposed to Cosmpolitanism. Cosmopolitanism is no moral preference for your own country. Citizen of the world. Patriotism is an irrational prejudice.

Why isn't patriotism explainable in liberal terms? - reciprocity?

Example of loyalty that trumps universal moral claims. Roommate that cheats.

Billy Bulger case.

Robert E Lee

Ethnic/ religious. Israel's airlift of Ethiopian Jews

Moral Individualism (another term for the classical liberal self) – To be free is to be subject only to obligations I voluntarily incur. I only owe to others what I consent to owe, or choose, or agree to, tacitly or explicitly. Opposed to any obligations of solidarity.

Illegal immigration. Children and borders. If we owe all people equally (Kant, Libertarianism) then why limit foreigners coming into the country? – Current crisis of thousands of children flooding over borders. Taxpayers are more responsible for their own needy than the needy of other countries. Is this morally defensible or mere favoritism and prejudice?

Michael Walzer – Regulating membership is the core of a community. Without it there would be no community.

Criticism of Communitarianism

Walzer - Justice is relative to social meanings. Relativism. Justice is just being faithful to values of your community. No universal conception of justice. Justice is fidelity to conventions of a particular society.

Narrative self, Communitarianism – “Eyes on the Prize” clip. Segregation. Could justify racism , segregation.

Cultural Relativism – There are no universal moral values. What is right and wrong is defined by the culture you are a part of, or what most people believe. (Argument is based on the fact that different cultures have different moral values. Ethnocentric to judge some moral codes as primitive or wrong).

Criticisms: -We could be members of different cultures, so which culture's values do we choose?
- Disallows us from saying any cultural practice is wrong, but certainly some practices can be wrong: racism, segregation, genocide, genital mutilation, oppression of women, human sacrifice, etc. etc. So cultures can be morally fallible just as individuals can. If we are to say these things are really wrong, we must appeal to certain universal principles and rights, which CR says do not exist. So CR must be wrong
- If CR is right then all moral reformers are really bad and evil since they go against the prevailing moral code, which for a CR defines what is right.
- Commits the appeal to popularity fallacy.
- Argument for CR makes the faulty inference that the fact that people or cultures disagree about what is right, means there can be no correct answer.

Can Communitarianism and narrative conception of self, and ethics of solidarity be saved from the objection that it is relativistic?

Considerations

Friendship – Montesquieu. If people were perfectly virtuous they wouldn't have friends. Friendship would be an irrational prejudice.

Communitarianism does not have to accept all conceptions of good. It can incorporate the non-relativistic Aristotelian notion of intrinsically good ends. Some conceptions of good (segregationists) are not really good. And it is possible through reasoning to come up with pretty good answers (Contra scepticism).

Same Sex marriage Debate

Is it necessary to answer questions about what is good and bad in thinking about justice? - Yes.

Is it possible to reason about justice? - Yes

Three positions:

State should recognize same sex marriage

State should not recognize same sex marriage.

State should not recognize any marriages – stay neutral, remove state from recognizing any sort of

unions.

Third option is not really possible. Deciding first and second cannot be done in neutral terms because it gives the stamp of approval by the state, a judgment about what is good or not, and whether gay marriages should be worthy of honoring. This goes beyond liberal neutrality, and the conception of equality, and rights. In the Mass. Supreme Court case, the judges did not remain neutral on moral and religious questions. It is not possible to remain neutral. You have to reason about the good. This does not mean there is a simple rule or principle or rule to determine what is good. That is not possible. Reasoning about the good involves applying principles in particular cases, and we have seen in this class different moral theories that provide reasonable principles. But we have to apply those principles in certain ways, in certain situations. Principles should inform our judgments, but so should context and circumstances. Rawls' notion of reflective equilibrium, but this applies to our thinking about the good. Rawls along with most people think we may never agree about the good, so we need to rely on his theory of justice. But we may never agree about justice either, or rights. Justice is pluralistic too. So it is no objection to say the good is pluralistic. Debating about the good is dialectical and we can learn from each other and be more informed, and deep thinkers about issues. So we need to engage in these debates. No guarantee of agreement. But the respect of deliberation and engagement is the ideal for a pluralistic society. Why do we continue debating these issues if there are no answers? We have no choice because we live these answers every day.