

# **Introduction To Philosophy 2**

**Professor Ramsey**

# Course Objectives

- **Introduction to Central Themes**
  - **Repository For Unanswered Questions**
    - **Is There A God?**
    - **What Makes An Action Right?**
    - **Do We Have Free Will?**
    - **How Do We Know What Is Real?**
  - **Focus On Topics in Metaphysics, Ethics and Epistemology**

# **Course Objectives (cont.)**

- **Introduction to Important Philosophers**
  - **Note: We Study Certain People Because Of What They Said About Important Issues; We Don't Study Certain Issues Because Important People Wrote About Them.**
  - **Emphasis Upon Both Classical And Contemporary Thinkers**
  - **Emphasis Upon Western Analytic Tradition**

# Course Objectives (cont.)

- **Introduction to Doing Philosophy**
  - **Ideals of Good Reasoning:**
    - **Clarity and Precision**
    - **Valid Arguments and Defensible Premises**
    - **Intellectual Integrity**
      - **Note: None Of This Comes Naturally**
      - **The Tragedy Of Your Education Up To This Point**
  - **Asking Hard and Dangerous Questions**
    - **Hard Because About Things Taken For Granted**
    - **Dangerous Because We May Not Like The Answers**

# Course Objectives (cont.)

- **Appreciation of Our Own Ignorance**
  - **The Wisdom Of Socrates:**
    - “Wisdom Is Knowing What You Don’t Know”
  - **Virtually Nothing Taken For Granted**
  - **Examine Fundamental Beliefs -- Often Wind Up Believing Less Than Before**

# **Philosophical Method**

- **Logic: A Calculus For Good Reason**
- **Clarification, Not Obfuscation**
  - **Distinctions and Disambiguation**
- **Examples and Counterexamples**
  - **Revealing Our Deepest Convictions**
  - **Testing Our Principles and Definitions**

# **Logic: Primary Philosophical Tool**

- **Logic Gives Us Rules For Reasoning**
- **Arguments And Their Parts**
  - **Premises**
  - **Sub and Main Conclusions**
- **Note: Relation Between Premises and Conclusion Is What Matters**
  - **Calculus For Generating New Beliefs On Basis Of Old Ones**

# **Types Of Argument: Two Main Forms Of Inference**

## ▪ **Deductive Inference**

- **Validity: If The Premises Are True, The Conclusion Must Be True**
- **Distinguishing Validity From Truth**
  - **Arguments: Valid Or Invalid; Not True Or False**
  - **Premises: True Of False; Not Valid Or Invalid**
  - **Logicians Care More About Truth Preservation Than Truth**
  - **Soundness: Valid AND True Premises**

# Logical Schema

- **Symbolic Variables**
- **Some Common Deductive Forms:**
  - **Categorical Syllogism**
  - **Modus Ponens**
  - **Modus Tollens**

# Non-Deductive Reasoning

- **Inductive Inference**
  - **Probability: If The Premises Are True, The Conclusion is Probably True**
  - **Inference To Next Case**
  - **Universal Generalization**
- **Inference To Best Explanation**
  - **Appealing To Best Hypothesis**
- **Fallacies**

# **PHILOSOPHY OF** **RELIGION**

- **Preliminary Issues:**
  - **Agreement vs. Tolerance**
    - **Different Religions ARE Incompatible**
    - **Religious Claims Aren't True FOR Individuals**
  - **Reason and Faith**
    - **Unusual Standards For Belief**
    - **Recent Trends Go Against Western Tradition**
    - **Classic Trinity Of Arguments For Belief In God:**
      - **Ontological, Cosmological and Teleological**

# The Ontological Argument

- **Background: Important Concepts, Ideas and Distinctions:**
  - *A Priori* and *A Posteriori* Arguments
  - **Existing vs. Non-Existing Things**
    - Everest vs. Fountain of Youth
  - **Possible vs. Impossible vs. Necessary Things**
    - Unicorns, Round Squares and ???

# **Background For Ontological Argument (cont.)**

- **Existence In Reality vs. Existence in Understanding**
  - **Undiscovered Planet Has Only Former**
  - **Sherlock Holmes Has Only Latter**
  - **George Bush Has Both**
- **Perfections**
  - **“Great-Making” Qualities; Properties That Make Something Better**
  - **Key Idea: Existence In Reality Is A Perfection**

# Background (cont.)

- **“Reductio ad Absurdum” Argument**
  - **Assumes Negation Of Conclusion To Establish Conclusion**
  - **Show Negation Of Thesis Leads To Contradiction**
- **Anselm’s Definition of God:**
  - **The Being Than Which No Greater Is Possible**
  - **Historical Roots**

# The Argument

- **1. God Exists In The Understanding**
- **2. God Is A Possible Being**
  - **Even Atheists Allow 1 & 2**
- **3. If Something Exists Only In The Understanding And Could Have Existed In Reality, Then It Could Have Been Greater Than It Is**
  - **Natural Assumption -- Date Example**

# **The Argument (cont.)**

- **4. Suppose God Exists Only In The Understanding**
  - **Reductio Premise -- Assumes The Opposite Of What Anselm Is Trying To Show (That God Exists In Reality Too)**
- **5. Then God Might Have Been Greater Than He Actually Is**
  - **Follows Directly From 1, 2, 3 & 4**

# The Argument (cont.)

- **6. God Is A Being Than Which A Greater Is Possible**
  - Follows Directly From 5
- **7. The Being Than Which No Greater Is Possible Is A Being Than Which A Greater Is Possible**
  - Restates 6 Substituting Anselm's Definition For 'God'
  - Key Point: This Is A Contradiction

# **The Argument (cont.)**

- **8. It Must Be False That God Exists Only In The Understanding**
  - **Rejection of 4 (The Claim That God Exists Only In The Understanding)**
    - **If 1, 2 & 3 Are Obvious, And 5, 6 and 7 Follow Directly From Prior Premises, 4 Must Be Wrong!!!**
- **9. Therefore, God Exists In Reality As Well As Understanding**
  - **Follows From 1 & 8**
  - **Establishes That God Really Exists!!!**

# Objections And Replies

- **Gaunilo's Objection: Argument Too Strong**
  - **Proving The Existence Of The Perfect Island**
  - **First Reply: Argument Concerns Only Things In General (Not Any Specific Thing)**
  - **Second Reply: Fully Perfect Island Not Possible**
    - **But What About A Semi-Perfect Island???**

# **Objections And Replies (cont.)**

- **Kant's Objection: Existence Is Not A Predicate**
  - **Attacks Premise (3), Claiming Statements Presuppose Existence**
  - **Reply: Many Statements Clearly Don't Presuppose Existence**
    - **Statements About Mythical Beings**

# **Objections And Replies (cont.)**

- **Possibility Objection: Anselm's God Not Possible**
  - **Analogy With Integers -- No Greatest One**
  - **Reply: Perhaps God Is Like Angles, Not Integers**
    - **We Can't Say One Way Or The Other**

# Objections And Replies (cont.)

- **Rowe's Objection: We Must Distinguish Between Talking About Properties Which Make Up A Concept, And Talking About Whether Or Not A Concept Is Instantiated**
  - **Example: Magico vs. Magican**
  - **Crux Point: Anselm Shows That No Non-Existent Being Would Qualify As God; Not That God Actually Exists**

# Further Considerations

- **Is It Really OK To View Existence And Non-Existence As Properties?**
  - **Metaphysical Worries About Rowe's Analysis**
  - **Use-Mention Errors**
    - **Confusing Representation With Thing Represented**
  - **Constructing A New Analysis**

# **The Cosmological Argument**

- **Aquinas: 1225--1274; Clarke: 1675--1729**
- **Background**
  - **Sources Of Explanation: Three Options:**
    - Explained By a) Other, b) Nothing, c) Self
  - **Principle of Sufficient Reason**
    - Individual Things & Events Need An Explanation
    - Positive Facts Need An Explanation

# The Argument

- **First Version:**
  - **A. Things Are Moved/Changed/Caused By Something Else**
  - **B. This Cannot Go On Forever**
    - **Problems With Infinite Regress**
  - **C. Therefore, There Must Be A First Mover/Changer/Cause**
  - **E. This Is God**

# The Argument (cont.)

- **Second Version:**
  - **A. Every Being Is Either Dependent Or Self-Existent**
  - **B. Not Every Being Can Be Dependent**
  - **C. Therefore, There Must Be A Self-Existent Being**
  - **D. This Is God**

# Objections And Replies

- **Attacks On First Version:**
  - **Why Must Uncaused Event Be God?**
    - **Reply: Misunderstanding Point Of Argument**
  - **What's Wrong With Infinite Regress, Where Individual Events Are Each Explained By Another, *Ad Infinitum***
    - **Reply: But What Explains Series Of Events?**
      - **Appealing To Second Part Of PSR**

# Objections And Replies (cont.)

- **Attacks On Second Version:**
  - **Fallacy Of Composition -- Just Because Members Of Set Need Explanation, The Set Itself Does Not**
    - **Reply: Again, Second Part Of PSR**
  - **But Why Accept PSR???**
    - **Replies: 1) Intuitive; 2) Presupposition Of Reason**
  - **Why Doesn't PSR Apply To God?**
    - **Appeal To Self-Existence?**

# **The Teleological Argument**

- Aquinas, Paley (1743-1805)
- **The Argument: Two Ways To View It:**
- **First Way: Argument By Analogy**
  - 1. Aspects Of Natural World Are Like Machines
  - 2. Machines Are Produced By Intelligent Design
  - 3. Therefore, Aspects Of Natural World Are Produced By Intelligent Design (God)

# **Key Questions Regarding First Premise:**

- **Which Aspects Of Natural World Are Like Machines?**
  - **Solar Systems?**
  - **Organisms?**
- **In What Ways Are These Aspects Of Natural World Like Machines?**
  - **Moving Parts?**
  - **Regularity?**
  - **Teleology!**

# The Focus On Functionality

- **Biological Systems And Organisms**
  - **Regularity Plus Teleology**
    - **Internal Parts And Sub-Systems With Clear Purposes**
  - **The Link Between Functionality And Intelligent Design**
    - **Purposefulness Implies Intention**

# **The Teleological Argument (cont.)**

- **Second Way: Inference To Best Explanation**

1. **World Contains Many Well-Crafted Machines With Functional Parts**

2. **Best Explanation For This Is An Intelligent Craftsman/Designer**

3. **Therefore, There Exists An Intelligent Craftsman/Designer (God)**

- **Garden Analogy**

# Objections And Replies

- **Hume's Criticisms (First Way)**
  - Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion: 1779
    - **Take Analogy Seriously: Suggests Imperfect God(s)**
- **Darwinian Criticism (Second Way)**
  - **Evolution Provides Alternative Explanation**
    - **Apparent Design From Random Processes: "The Blind Watchmaker"**
- **Teleology Resurrected: "Fine Tuning"**  
**Arguments About The Universe**

# **Theodicy And The Problem Of** **Evil**

- **The Argument Against Western Theism:  
Reason To Doubt That A Christian God  
Exists**
  1. **Christianity Assumes God Is Omniscient,  
Omnipotent, Perfectly Good, And Loves Us**
  2. **Massive Evil Exists**
    - **Moral Evil (Suffering Caused By Us)**
    - **Natural Evil (Suffering Caused By Nature)**

# **The Argument Against Theism (cont.)**

## **3. God And Evil Are Inconsistent**

- **Unpacking The Premise**
  - **God Would Know About Suffering (Omniscient)**
  - **God Could Have Prevented Suffering (Omnipotent)**
  - **God Would Want To Prevent Suffering (Loving, Perfectly Good)**
- **What Sort Of Inconsistency?**
  - **Strong: Logical Inconsistency (Problematic)**
  - **Weak: Evidential Inconsistency**

## **4. Therefore, Either God Or Evil Doesn't Exist**

# **The Argument Against Theism (cont.)**

## **5. The Existence Of Evil Is Indisputable**

- **Suffering Of Both Forms Clearly Exists**

## **6. Therefore, The God Of Christianity Does Not Exist**

- **Note: Like The Teleological Argument *For* God, The Argument Is Based On The Nature Of The World.**

# **Responses To The Argument And Rebuttals**

- **First Response: Challenge (2, 5)**
  - **Denies Suffering Is Real**
  - **Rebuttals:**
    - **Makes God A Deceiver**
    - **Hard To Take Seriously**
- **Second Response: Challenge Premise (3)  
In Many Ways**

# **Challenging Inconsistency Between God And Evil (cont.)**

- **Parent Analogy:**
  - **Suffering Is For Reasons We Don't Comprehend**
  - **Note: Doesn't Explain Suffering; Just Suggests How Suffering May Be Consistent With God's Existence**
- **Rebuttals:**
  - **Bad Analogy; Parents Aren't Omnipotent**
  - **Double Standards**
    - **If Good Events Reflect God's Nature, Then Why Don't Bad Events?**

# **Theodicies: Making Sense Of Suffering**

- **Counterpart Theory:**
  - **Just As Tallness Can't Exist Without Shortness, Happiness Cannot Exist Without Suffering**
- **Rebuttals:**
  - **Real Suffering Is Not Context-Dependent**
    - **Bill Gates And Rashid**
    - **The Objective Reality Of Chronic Suffering**
  - **Even If Context Dependent, Only Small Amount Of Suffering Would Be Needed**
    - **Not Suffering Vs. Appreciating Not Suffering**

# **Theodicy (cont.): Virtue Defense**

- **Virtue Defense:**

- **Virtues Like Sympathy, Compassion, Forgiveness All Require Suffering; God Wanted Virtues, So Suffering Must be Permitted**

- **Rebuttals:**

- **Virtues Are Not Good In Themselves; Only Good Because They Allow Us To *Cope* With Suffering**
    - **Wrong To Allow Suffering So People Can Exhibit Compassion**
    - **Chemotherapy Analogy**
  - **Virtues Counter-Balanced By Vices**

# **Theodicy (cont.): Free Will Defense**

- **Free Will Defense:**

- 1. Not Possible For Humans To Be Free And Incapable Of Doing Moral Evil**
- 2. A World In Which We Are Free Is Better Than One In Which We Are Restricted**
- 3. God Creates The Best Possible World**
- 4. Therefore, God Created A World In Which People Sometimes Do Moral Evil**

# **Free Will Defense: Rebuttals And Replies**

- **What About Natural Evil?**
  - **Reply: We Freely Choose Not To Avoid Dangers**
- **Challenge (1): We Already Live With Restrictions, But Still Consider Ourselves Free**
  - **Reply: What Sort Of Freedom Matters?**
- **Challenge (2): Why Not Sacrifice Some Freedom For Less Suffering?**
  - **Look At Our Normal Views Of Justice**
    - **Reply: Many Reject Morality Of Preventative Restriction**

# Rebuttals To Free Will Defense (cont.)

- **Challenge Validity Of Argument**
  - **Capacity To Do Moral Evil Needn't Lead To Actual Moral Evil**
    - **Why Not A World With Better Characters Who Freely Choose Not To Harm Others?**
  - **Responses:**
    - **Is Such A World The Best?**
      - **Soul-Making Theodicies: The Process Is More Important Than The End Result**

# **Freedom Problems In Christianity**

- **Foreknowledge And The Problem Of Freedom**
- **God Knew Eons Ago About All Our Actions**
  - **We Can't Change The Past**
  - **We Can't Make God Wrong**
  - **So, We Can't Do Otherwise**
- **Reply: Taking God Outside Of Time**

# **MIND AND FREEDOM**

- **Addressing The Mind-Body Problem**
  - **An Inconsistent Tetrad:**
    - **Mind Is Non-Material (Spiritual)**
    - **Body Is Material (Physical)**
    - **Mind And Body Interact**
    - **Material And Non-Material Do Not Interact**
- **Possible Solutions: Dualism And The Varieties Of Materialism**

# Two Types Of Dualism

- **First Type: Substance Dualism: 2 Kinds**
  - **Interactionism (Descartes, Popular View)**
    - **Mind And Body Made Of Different Kinds Of Stuff**
      - **Thinking vs. Extended**
    - **Mind And Body Interact**
      - **BIG PROBLEM: HOW???**
  - **Parallelism (Leibniz)**
    - **Pre-Established Harmony**

# Dualism (cont.)

- **Second Type: Property Dualism**
  - **“Irreducible Properties” Of Certain States**
    - **Reducibility vs. Irreducibility**
  - **What Sorts Of Properties?**
    - **Qualitative: Raw Feels**
      - **Qualia States: Pains, Tickles, etc.**
    - **Intentional: Aboutness, Truth And Falsehood**
      - **Propositional Attitude States: Beliefs, Desires, etc.**
  - **Deep Worry: Epiphenomenalism**

# Problems With Dualisms

- **Neurological Dependency Of The Mental Undermines Substance Dualism**
  - **Drugs And Brain Disorders Should Not Undermine Mental *Capacities***
- **No Sign Of Non-Physical Causation**
- **Craziness Of Epiphenomenalism**
- **New Respect For Matter In Age Of Computers**
- **Explanatory Weakness Of Dualism**
- **Problem Of Other Minds**

# **Type-Identity Theory (Basic Materialism)**

- **Background:**
  - **Key Question: What Makes Something A Mental State?**
  - **Reductionism In Science**
    - **Example: Water Is H<sub>2</sub>O**
  - **Core Assumption:**
    - **To Discover The Essence Of Something, We Focus Upon Its Physical Composition**

# **Type-Identity Theory**

- **Central Claim:**
  - **Mental States Are Defined By Virtue Of Their Underlying Neurological Make-Up. In Short, Types Of Mental States Are Simply Types Of Brain States.**
- **Virtues:**
  - **No Interaction Problem**
  - **No Deep Worries About Other Minds**
  - **Makes Psychology Part Of The Natural Sciences**
    - **Evolutionary And Developmental Plausibility**

# **Problems With Identity Theory**

- **Appeals To Leibniz's Law**
  - **Minds And Brains Seem To Have Different Properties**
    - **Reply: Look At Historical Analogues**
- **Material Chauvinism**
  - **Martian And Brain Transplant Thought-Experiments And What They Show**
    - **Reply: Functionalist Materialism**

# **Jackson's Argument Against Physicalism**

- **The “Knowledge Argument”:**
  - **A) Mary Knows All Physical Facts About Color Vision**
  - **B) Mary Does Not Know All Facts About Color Vision**
    - **Demonstrated By Mary's Learning When Seeing Red**
  - **C) Therefore, Some Facts About Color Vision Are Left Out Of Physical Account**
  - **D) Therefore, Some Aspects Of Color Vision (And Other Qualia) Are Non-Physical**

# **Why Epiphenomenalism?**

- **Causal Closure Of The Physical World**
- **No Evidence Of Gaps In Neurological Processing**
- **Apparent Problems With Epiphenomenalism Can Be Handled**
  - **Apparent Causal Role Of Qualia Is Simply That: Apparent**
  - **Evolution Need Only Select For Brain States**

# **Problems With Jackson's Argument**

- **Argument Also Works Against Dualism**
- **Fallacy Of Equivocation**
  - **Two Senses Of “Know”**
    - **Knowledge By Description (Discursive)**
    - **Knowledge By Acquaintance (Non-Discursive)**

# **FREEDOM AND** **DETERMINISM**

- **The Clash Between A Modern Account Of Thought On The One Hand, And Free Will, Human Agency And Moral Responsibility On The Other.**
- **Setting Out The Problem And Some Proposed Solutions**

# **Premise 1: Universe Governed By Deterministic Laws**

- **Matter Obeys Causal Regularity And Laws**
- **No Uncaused Events**
- **Potential For Exact Predictability**
  - **Laplace's Demon/Super-Computer**
    - **Note: We Should be Thankful That The Universe Is Deterministic In This Way**

# **Premise 2: We Are *Part* Of This Deterministic Universe**

- **Plausibility Of Physicalism**
  - **Mental Processes = Brain Processes**
    - **Recall Arguments Against Dualism**
  - **No Evidence Of Neurological Anomalies**
    - **Brain Governed By Laws Of Physics**
- **Note: Even Property Dualisms Admit Behavior is Governed Solely By The Brain!**

# **Conclusion 1: Human Actions Are Determined!!!**

- **Human Action Determined By Brain Activity**
- **Brain Activity Governed By Interaction Of:**
  - **Genetic Endowment**
  - **Environmental Stimuli: Prior And Current**
  - **Laws Of Physics And Chemistry**
- **Brain As Organic Computer**
  - **Complex But Determined Programs**
  - **Potential For Manipulation (Being Sphekish)**
    - **Note: Determinism Is Not Same As Fatalism**

# **Conclusion 2: We Aren't Really Free!!!**

- **Hard Determinism:**
  - **Freedom Requires Ability To Do Otherwise**
    - (Given Certain Background Conditions)
  - **We Lack The Ability To Do Otherwise**
    - (Because We Are Determined)
  - **Therefore, We Aren't Free**
- **Freedom Is An Illusion!!!**
  - **Like A Train That Thinks It “Chooses” To Go Down A Certain Path**

# **Conclusion 3: We Don't Have Moral Responsibility!!!**

- **Ought Implies Can**
  - **To Say You Ought To Do Otherwise, We Must Assume You Can Do Otherwise.**
  - **Determinism Denies You Can Do Otherwise.**
  - **Therefore, It Is Wrong Say You Ought To Do Otherwise.**
- **Responsibility Requires Freedom.**
  - **Comparing Different Cases: Psychopath vs. Stroke Victim**

# Replies To Hard Determinism

- **Two Main Strategies:**
  - **1: Deny Determinism**
    - Appeal to Quantum Indeterminacy
  - **2: Deny Determinism and Freedom Are Really Incompatible**
    - **Compatibilism (Soft Determinism): Rethinking Freedom**

# Denying Determinism

- **Quantum Indeterminism**
  - Spontaneous Events At Quantum Level
  - Probabilistic, Not Deterministic Laws
- **Responses:**
  - Appeal to Hidden Variables
  - Quantum Indeterminism Irrelevant For Us
  - Is Randomness What We Want for Freedom???
    - How Will Being Spastic Help?

# **Re-conceptualizing The Problem**

- **Initially, Problem Seemed To Stem From Materialism Assumption**
- **But Now, Whether You Are A Materialist Or A Dualist, It Seems We Only Have Two Choices:**
  1. **Thought Processes Are Casually Determined**
  2. **Thought Processes Are Random**
- **Apparently Neither Gives Us Freedom!!!**
- **A Libertarian Solution?**
  - **Indeterminism Without Randomness?**

# Compatibilism (Soft Determinism)

- **Competing Accounts of Freedom**
  - **Metaphysical Freedom (HD): Freedom At Least Requires Ability To Do Otherwise**
  - **Moral Freedom (COMP.): Freedom Only Requires Ability To Do What You Want**
- **Key Point: Debate Between HD and Compatibilism Is NOT Over Whether Or Not We Are Determined. It Is Over The Correct Analysis Of Freedom!**

# Arguments For Compatibilism

- **How Can We Act Differently From What We Want?**
- **Ability To Do Otherwise Would Never Be Utilized!!!**
  - **HD Analysis Of Freedom Suggests It Would Be Irrelevant To Our Lives**
    - **The Twin-Earth Scenario**
- **Hume: Freedom Requires Determinism**
  - **Alternative Appears To Be Loss Of Control**

# Problems With Compatibilism

- **Type 1 Counterexamples: Manipulative Neuroscientist/Hypnotist/Brainwasher**
- **Type 2 Counterexamples: Locke's Room Example**
  - **Being Free vs. Being Lucky**
- **Key Point: We Can Do What We Want And Not Be Free!**

# The Debate:

- **HD:** Free acts require the ability to do otherwise; we don't have that, so we aren't free.
- **COMP:** No, your analysis of freedom is mistaken; freedom only requires that we do what we want. We often do this, so we are free.
- **HD:** No, YOUR analysis of freedom is mistaken since there are cases where people do what they want, but clearly are not free (i.e., brainwashing, etc.)

# The Debate (cont.):

- **COMP:** Wait, those cases don't count as counter-examples to our analysis of freedom since in those cases, the person isn't really acting on her own wants; instead, the wants have been installed by outside forces.
- **HD:** Oh yea? Well if determinism is true, everyone's wants and beliefs are installed by outside forces -- what's the relevant difference between brain-washing and ordinary childhood?
- **COMP:** Oh yea? Well, your mother . . .

# **ETHICS**

- **The Importance Of Careful Reasoning**
  - **Consequences Of Bad Ethical Thought**
- **Two Critical Questions:**
  - **1. What Is The Scope Of Ethical Principles?**
    - **Is Some Form Of Relativism Correct?**
  - **2. What Is The Justification For Ethical Principles?**
    - **What Ultimately Makes An Act Right Or Wrong?**

# **Important Distinctions To Bear In Mind:**

- **Morally Permissible vs. Morally Forbidden vs. Morally Obligatory**
- **Legal vs. Moral**
- **Particular Moral Judgments vs. General Moral Principles**

# **MORAL OBJECTIVISM VS. SUBJECTIVISM**

## **▪ Objectivism**

- The Moral Status Of An Action Is Completely Objective: Conflicting Views Cannot All Be Right**
  - Not Dependent Upon Attitudes, Preferences or Culture**
  - Moral Claims Are True Or False In The Same Sense As Scientific Claims**

## **▪ Subjectivism**

- The Moral Status Of An Action Is Not Completely Objective: Conflicting Views Can All Be Right**
  - Depends On Attitudes, Preferences Or Culture**
  - Moral Claims Are True Or False In The Same Sense In Which Fashion Claims Are True Or False**

# **A Popular Form Of Subjectivism: Cultural Relativism**

- **The “Cultural Differences Argument”:**
  - 1. Different Cultures Have Different Moral Codes**

**Appeal To Famous Cases**
  - 2. Therefore, There Are No Objective, Universal, Culturally Independent Facts Or Considerations Which Determine The Truth Or Falsehood Of Different Moral Claims**

# **Problems With The Cultural Differences Argument**

- **Extreme Consequences Of Relativism:**
  - **Can't Justify Criticizing Other Societies**
  - **Can't Justify Criticizing Aspects Of Our Own Society**
  - **No Such Thing As Cultural Progress**
  - **Sometimes Used In Self-Refuting Manner**
- **Argument Is Invalid**
- **Rethinking The First Premise**
  - **Necessary Conditions For Societies**

# **Important Distinctions To Bear In Mind:**

- **Morally Permissible vs. Morally Forbidden vs. Morally Obligatory**
- **Legal vs. Moral**
- **Particular Moral Judgments vs. General Moral Principles**

# **JUSTIFYING MORAL PRINCIPLES AND BELIEFS**

- **Grounding Morality Through Theological Considerations (Divine Command Theory):**
  - **An Act Is Right If And Only If God Permits It; An Act Is Morally Wrong Iff God Forbids It.**
  - **Practical Problems:**
    - **Whose Interpretation Of God?**
  - **Reply:**
    - **Defining Feature Of Morality Need Not Be Easy To Discern**

# **Problems With Theological Analyses Of Morality (cont.)**

- **Plato's Dilemma:**
  - **Is An Act Right (Wrong) Because God Allows (Forbids) It, Or Does God Allow (Forbid) It Because It Is Right (Wrong)?**
  - **If Former, Then:**
    - **Arbitrariness: Torturing Innocent Children Could Be Good**
    - **God's Own Goodness Is Uninteresting (Tyrant Analogy)**
  - **If Latter, Then:**
    - **Morality Is Not Based Upon God's Commands**
      - **Note: Other Properties Of God Also Admit Of Independent Analyses**

# Quinn's Rebuttal

- **God's Commands Are Not Fully Arbitrary**
  - **The Constraining Role of *Divine Goodness***
    - **Reply: Does This Fully Remove Arbitrariness?**
- **Divine Command Theorists *Should* Allow Counter-Intuitive Cases**
  - **Historical Examples**
    - **Abraham and Hosea**

# ACT UTILITARIANISM

- **Background: John Stuart Mill**
  - 1806-1873
  - From Philosophy Prodigy To Burnout
- **Formulations Of The Doctrine**
  - Mill: “Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to promote the reverse of happiness”

# Formulation Of The Doctrine (cont.)

- **Key Point: Emphasis Upon *Consequences* of Actions**
- **Questions About Mill's Definition:**
  - **“Tend To Produce Happiness”**
    - **“Tend To Produce” or “Produce”?**
    - **Which Things Produced Really Count?**
    - **What Is Meant By ‘Happiness’?**
    - **Whose Happiness?**
    - **Can We Measure Happiness?**

# Formulating Utilitarianism (cont.)

- **Introducing A Notion Of Utility**
  - Subtracting *Dolars* From *Hedons*
- **Note: Total Utility Is What Matters**
- **So:**
  - **Moral Acts Can Sometimes Produce Pain (But Overall They Produce Less Pain Than Other Options)**
  - **Immoral Acts Can Sometimes Produce Pleasure (But Overall They Produce Less Pleasure)**

# **Formulating Utilitarianism (cont.)**

- **Revised Formulation: An Act Is Right IFF There Is No Other Act The Agent Could Have Performed That Has Higher Utility**
- **Virtues:**
  - **Captures Common Sense Views Of Morality**
  - **Grounds Morality In Something Objective**
    - **Trying To Derive An “Ought” From An “Is”**

# **Problems With Utilitarianism**

- **“Doctrine Of Swine” Objection**
  - **If Util. Is Correct, Then Only Relevant Moral Consideration Is Amount Of Pleasure**
  - **False That The Only Relevant Moral Consideration Is Amount Of Pleasure**
  - **Therefore, Util. Is False.**
- **Mill’s Response: Introduce A Quality Variable**
  - **Three Dimensions: Duration, Intensity, Quality**

# **Problems With Utilitarianism (cont.)**

- **“Too High Of Standard” Objection**
  - **If Util. Is Correct, Then An Act Is Right Only If It Stems From A Motive To Promote Best Interests Of Society**
  - **False That Right Acts Must All Stem From Such A Motive**
  - **Therefore, Util. Is False**
- **Mill’s Response: Take Consequentialism Seriously (Duties vs. Motives)**

# **Further Difficulties For Utilitarianism**

- **Harming The Innocent**
  - **The “Rawlsian” Alternative And The Moral Point Of View**
- **Trivial Acts**
- **Supererogatory Acts**
- **Common Response: Problems Rest Not With Utilitarianism, But With Our Common Attitudes**
  - **“OutSmarting” The Critics**

# **THE ETHICS OF ASSISTANCE**

- **Preliminary Comments**
  - **Making Philosophy Relevant For Our Lives**
  - **The Controversial Nature Of Peter Singer**
  - **Stepping Back And Thinking About Our Own Moral Integrity**
    - **Do We Have What It Would Take To Do The Right Thing In A Culture That Is Morally Misguided?**

# **Singer's Argument:**

- 1. Suffering And Death From Lack Of Food, Shelter And Medical Attention Are Very Bad Things.**
- 2. If We Can Prevent Very Bad Things From Happening, Without Sacrificing Something Of Comparable (Any) Moral Value, Then We Are Morally Required To Do So.**
- 3. Therefore, We Are Morally Required To Prevent Suffering And Death From Lack Of Food, Shelter And Medical Attention Without Sacrificing Something Of Moral Value.**

# Motivating The 2<sup>nd</sup> Premise

- **Three Cases: The “Shallow Pond”, Unger’s “Vintage Sedan”, And “The Envelope”**
- **The Vintage Sedan vs. The Envelope**
  - **5 Reasons To Think Behavior In The Envelope Case Is Morally Worse:**
    - 1) Cost Is Less
    - 2) Number Affected By Inaction Is Greater
    - 3) What Is Lost Is Greater
    - 4) Victims Are Not Responsible For Situation
    - 5) Victims’ Behavior Is Not Morally Dubious

# Hard And Disturbing Facts

- **Number Of Humans Dying Preventable Deaths Daily: 25,000 (1,000 Per Hour)**
- **Age Group Of Most Deaths: Under 6**
- **Cause Of Most Deaths: Depleted Immune Systems From Chronic Malnourishment**
- **UN Target Request For Assistance From Developed Nations: 0.7% of GNP**
- **Nations That Meet Target: Denmark, Sweden, The Netherlands, Norway**
- **Typical Nation: Japan at 0.27 %**
- **Worst Contributor: America at 0.1 %; 0.14 % With Private Contributions**
- **Americans Spend: 14 Billion On Foreign Assistance  
50 Billion On Entertainment Industry  
379 Billion On Military Budget**

# **Responding To The Cases (Explaining Conflicting Intuitions)**

- **Three Possibilities:**
- **The Envelope Scenario Is Significantly Different From The Pond/Sedan Scenario**
  - **Reply: Modify Cases To Show That Adding Or Subtracting Alleged Relevant Feature Makes No Difference**
- **Our Normal Intuitions About The Pond/Sedan Case Are Mistaken: It Is Morally OK Not To Help**
  - **Reply: If We Know Anything About Morality, We Know Not Helping Is Seriously Wrong**
- **Our Normal Intuitions About The Envelope Case Are Mistaken: It Is Morally Wrong Not To Give**
  - **Note: Many Plausible Explanations For This Mistaken Attitude**

# Key Features Of 2<sup>nd</sup> Premise

- **Irrelevance Of Proximity**
  - Distance May Make Us Feel Less Obligated, But It Doesn't Remove Actual Obligation
  - Appeals To Ignorance And Inability No Longer Plausible
- **Irrelevance Of Others' Involvement**
  - Inactivity May Make Us Feel Less Obligated, But . . .
- **Only Need To Prevent Bad, Not Promote Good**

# Radical Consequences Of Singer/Unger Argument

- **Traditional Demarcation Between Duty And Charity Is Mistaken**
  - **Helping Needy Is Morally Obligated**
  - **Immoral Not To Help Needy!**
- **Rethinking Types Of Giving**
  - **Helping Those In Need vs. Helping Those *Really* In Need**
  - **Note: Given Our Actual Situation, Rarely Need To Sacrifice One Form Of Giving For Another**

# **Objections To Singer's Argument**

- **Too Drastic**
  - **Reply: Progress Sometimes Requires Drastic Revisions**
    - **Slavery Analogy**
    - **Congruence With Catholic Tradition**
- **Extreme Socialism**
  - **Reply:**
    - **Dubious Assumption All Socialism Is Bad**
    - **Arguments Requires Only Preventing Very Bad Things From Happening (Not Making Everyone Equal)**

# **Practical Objections:**

- **Always Will Be Starvation**
  - **False Assumption**
  - **Work For Population Control; Contribute Wisely**
  - **Return To Drowning Child Case**
- **Responsibility of Government**
  - **Work To Change Government**
- **Giving Will Undermine Our Economy**
  - **Confusing Two Scenarios**
    - **All Give: Only Small Amount Required**
    - **Few Give: Little Impact**

# EPISTEMOLOGY

- **Exploring Our Access To The Truth; Examining Human Reason, Perception And Knowledge**
- **Three Great Philosophers And Their Different Epistemologies:**
  - **Descartes, Locke and Berkeley**

# **DESCARTES' PROJECT**

## **(Background)**

- **Descartes (1596-1650)**
  - **“Father” Of Modern Philosophy; Multi-Talented Genius**
  - **A Deeply Committed Catholic**
- **The Goal: An Edifice Of Knowledge**
  - **The Inverted Pyramid**
- **The Ground Rules: Avoid Error**
  - **Certainty And Justification**
    - **Chains Of Justification**
    - **Need For Certainty In First Link**

# Descartes' Project (cont.)

- **Seeking A Solid Foundation For The Inverted Pyramid Of Knowledge**
  - **Requirement: Absolute Certainty**
  - **Primary Tool: The Wrecking Ball Of Cartesian Doubt**
    - **Cartesian vs. Ordinary Doubt**
  - **Labor Saving Device: Grouping Beliefs By Virtue Of Their Type Of Support**
    - **Questioning Sources Of Beliefs**

# Getting To Work: Seeking The Foundation

- **First Assault On The Senses: The Argument From Illusion**
  - **Reply: Senses Seem To Work OK Much Of The Time**
- **Second Assault On The Senses: The Dreaming Argument**
  - **Key Point: We Can't Be Certain That We Aren't Now Dreaming**

# **Seeking The Foundation (cont.)**

- **Third Assault On Senses; Primary Assault On A Priori (Mathematical) Beliefs And (Almost) Everything Else: The Deceiving Demon Argument**
  - **Clearing The Decks With Doubt**
    - **No Source Immune From Deception**
  - **Note: Don't Need To Believe Demon Is Real; Only Possible**

# Seeking The Foundation (cont.)

- **The “Cogito”**
  - **“I Exist” Is Necessarily True Every Time I Think It**
  - **Even To Be Deceived We Must Exist And Have Mental States**
- **Other Works: “Cogito Ergo Sum”**
  - **“I Think Therefore I Am”**
  - **Certainty About The Content Of The Mind**
    - **We May Not Know If Thoughts And Experiences Are Accurate, But We Can Know We Are *Having* Such Thoughts And Experiences**
- **Descartes’ Archimedian Point**

# **Time Out: Reflection On Descartes' Legacy**

- **Defining Our True Essence: A Thinking Thing**
  - **Most Influential Account Of Dualism**
- **The “Ego-Centric Predicament”**
  - **Trying To Penetrate The Screen Of Perception**
  - **Avoiding *Solipsism***

# **Rebuilding The Pyramid:**

- **Goal: Establish We Can Trust Clear And Distinct Thoughts And Perceptions**
- **Available Resources: Contents Of The Mind**
  - **Concept Of God**
  - **Ancient Principles**
    - **Reality Comes In Degrees**
    - **Cause Must have As Much Reality As Effect**
    - **An Idea's Source Must Have As Much Formal Reality As The Idea's Own Objective Reality**
- **Next Step: Establishing God's Existence**
  - **Idea Of God Must Come From God!**

# **Rebuilding The Pyramid (cont.)**

- **Next Step: Clear And Distinct Ideas Must Be Accurate**
  - **God Is Not A Deceiver**
- **Next Step: Establishing Truth Of Beliefs About The World**
  - **If Clear And Distinct Perceptions Of World Are Accurate, Then The World Must Really Exist As We (Generally) Believe It Does.**

# **The Problem With Descartes' Project: The Cartesian Circle**

- **Why Suppose Ancient Principles Are Correct?**
  - **Justification Appears To Be That They Are Believed Clearly And Distinctly**
    - **Appeal To The “Light Of Nature”**
  - **But The Reliability Of Things Understood Clearly And Distinctly Is The Very Thing We Must Establish!!!**

# **The Enduring Problem Of Perception**

- **The Representational Theory Of Perception**
  - **No Direct Perception Of Anything Except Inner Representations**
    - **Naïve View: Inner Representations Fully “Resemble” That Which They Represent**
  - **Key Problem: What Justifies Resemblance Assumption???**
    - **Note: Direct Comparison Between Representation And Represented Is NOT Possible!**
  - **Two Questions:**
    - **Why Not Be A Solipsist?**
    - **Even If Not Solipsistic, Why Believe In Resemblance?**

# **From Rationalism To Empiricism**

- **Rationalists: Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Chomsky**
- **Empiricists: Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Skinner**
- **Innate Knowledge vs. Knowledge Through Experience**
- **Competing Paradigms of Knowledge**
  - **Euclid vs. Newton**

# **LOCKE'S PROJECT**

- **John Locke (1632-1704)**
- **Major Thinker In Metaphysics, Epistemology And Political Philosophy**
  - **Our Lockean Roots**
- **Rejecting Descartes' Rationalism For An Empiricist Picture**
  - **All Knowledge Based Upon Observation**
  - **Non-Deductive Reasoning Instead Of Proofs**

# **Locke's Arguments Against Solipsism**

- **Inferences To Best Explanation: Puzzles For The Solipsist:**
  - **Why Can't We Have Visual Experiences In The Dark?**
  - **Why Can't We Control Sensory Experience?**
  - **Why Is There Always Coherence And Consistency In Experience?**
- **Answer: Best Explanation Is The Reality Of External, Mind-Independent, Material World**

# Locke's Account Of Perception

- **Limited (Sophisticated) Representationalism**
  - **Primary Qualities: Motion, Number, Shape, Size**
    - **Features Of Things That Cause Similar Sensations In Our Minds -- We Can Experience As They Really Are**
  - **Secondary Qualities: Color, Taste, Smell, Hot & Cold**
    - **Power Of Things To Cause Dissimilar Sensations (Ideas) In Our Minds**

# **Defending The Distinction Between 2 Types Of Qualities**

- **Atomism And Newtonian Matter**
  - **Physical Things Are Made Out Of Smaller Bits With Only Shape, Size, Configuration, Number**
    - **Scientific Perspective: Geometrical Properties Are What Matter For Matter**
- **Continuum From Warmth To Pain**
  - **Extreme Warmth = Pain**
  - **If Latter Is A Mental State, So Is The Former**

# Variance Arguments

- **Basic Strategy: Show That Certain Features Of Our Experience Of Objects Cannot Be Actual Features Of The Object**
  - **First Version (Color, Taste):**
    - **It Is Impossible For Features Of Material Objects To Change Without Corresponding Change In Object**
    - **Thus, Aspects Of Our Sensory Experience Of An Object That Change When There Is No Corresponding Change In Object Are Not Qualities Inherent In The Object**
    - **Thus, Aspects Of Sensory Experience Of An Object That Change When There Is No Corresponding Change In Object Are Ideas**

# Variance Arguments (cont.)

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Version (Warm And Cold):**
  - **It Is Impossible For Features Of Material Objects To Be Incompatible**
  - **Thus, Aspects Of Our Sensory Experience Of An Object That Are Incompatible Are Not Qualities Inherent In The Object**
  - **Thus, Aspects Of Our Sensory Experience Of An Object That Are Incompatible Are Ideas**

# **BERKELEY'S PROJECT**

- **Bishop George Berkeley (1685-1753)**
  - **Eccentric Genius; Early “American” Scholar**
- **Background**
  - **Concern Over Ego-Centric Predicament**
  - **Defender Of Common Sense**
  - **Rethinking Primary-Secondary Quality Distinction**
  - **Critical Question: Why Suppose Any Resemblance Between Ideas And Matter???**

# Berkeley's Idealism

- **The Only Things That Exist Are Minds And Their Ideas!!!**
  - **Paradox In Berkeley's Philosophy: Berkeley Viewed Himself As The True Anti-Skeptic; As The Defender Of Common Sense Views; But He Denies Reality Of Matter!**
  - **Crucial Distinction Between Ordinary Objects On The One Hand, And Mind-Independent Matter, On The Other.**
    - **The Former Is Fine; The Latter Is What's Dubious**

# **What's The Matter With Matter For Berkeley?**

- **Hylas And Philonous: Goal Is To Avoid Skepticism**
  - **First Stage: Attacking Naive Representationalism**
    - **Continuum To Pain And Pleasure**
    - **Variance Arguments Again**
  - **Second Stage: Attacking Locke's Limited Representationalism**
    - **Use Locke's Own Arguments To Show The Primary Qualities Are Also Mind-Dependent**

# **Berkeley's Attack On Matter (cont.)**

- **Variance Arguments For Primary Qualities**
  - **Size Depends Upon Perceiver**
  - **Different Shapes For The Same Object**
  - **Degree Of Motion Depends On Psychological Factors**
- **The Failure Of Abstraction**
  - **No Such Thing As Size Or Motion "In General"**

# **Berkeley's Attack On Matter (cont.)**

- **Highlighting The Mysterious Nature Of Matter: The Uselessness Of “Substratum”**
  - **Matter Is Neither Perceivable Nor Conceivable!**
    - **All Experienced Qualities Are Ideas; Ideas Cannot Exist In A Non-Mental Substance**
    - **We Cannot Conceive Of Something With No Color Or Shape, Etc.**
    - **We Cannot Conceive Of Something Unconceived**
    - **No Basis For Inference To Mind-Independent Matter**
    - **Interaction Problems**

# **Berkeley's Defense Of Common Sense**

- **All Qualities We Perceive Really ARE In The Object**
- **We CAN Trust Our Senses**
- **We CAN Know Things As They Truly Are**
- **Objects ARE Real**

# **Berkeley's Challenge: Unperceived Objects**

- **If Objects Must Be Perceived To Exist, Then Do Things Pop Out Of Existence When No One Is Around???**
- **Berkeley's Reply:**
  - **To Avoid This Absurdity, There Must Be A Constant Perceiver Of Everything!**
    - **Only One Candidate: GOD**
  - **Berkeley Converts A Potential Criticism Into An Argument For God's Existence**