**Ethics**

**Meta-ethics**

* **Meta-ethics** – analyses the use of ethical language, such as what is good/bad
* **Normative ethics** – analyses the moral value of an action/thing
* **Cognitivism** – ethical statements are meaningful as they can be proved or falsified
* **Non-cognitivism** – ethical language does not give information and thus cannot be proved, instead it merely expresses emotions it wishes of the person using it
* **Teleological** – concerned with achieving a desirable end (e.g. Utilitarianism)
* **Deontological** – ethics based on duty (e.g. Kant, Christian ethics)
* **Analytical** statements – true by definition (e.g. a triangle has 3 sides)
* **Synthetic** statements – can only be verified by senses (e.g. it is raining outside)
* **Objective** – there is a universal and common understanding of what is good
* **Subjective** – good is only known to the individual; what is good varies for each individual

Naturalism

* Developed from empiricism
	+ We observe the world around us and create moral theories that fit our observations
* “good” exists and can be seen/described empirically
* Moral language is an **objective** fact; moral statements are objective as they can be measured empirically, so are applicable to all
* **Hume**
	+ Statements are either analytic or synthetic – Hume’s fork
	+ Moral language is neither, so it has no inherent meaning and cannot be analysed the same way
		- It is therefore subjective (take this as a challenge to the objective claims of naturalism)
	+ So the only way to understand moral statements is by experiencing good/bad
	+ This essentially is making an “is” from an “ought”, which leads to the naturalistic fallacy
* Naturalistic fallacy – challenge to naturalism
	+ Naturalism and Hume derives an ‘ought’ (a moral judgement) from an ‘is’ (a fact)
		- Making an ethical judgement factual
	+ **G.E. Moore** – this is a fallacy as “to define an ethical judgement as a statement of fact is an error”
		- Ethical statements can’t be proved with reference to facts
	+ **Hume** – attempting to derive an “ought” from an “is” is illogical as values are applied to facts, not discovered among them
		- In light of this, **Hume** is not doing this with his approach to naturalism; instead he is saying that moral language is **subjective** an and expression of feelings based on experiences

Intuitionism

* Ethical language/morality is **objective** and **cognitive**
* **G.E. Moore** – (*Principa Ethica*)
	+ Good can’t be defined in terms of natural phenomena (which is what naturalism claims)
		- Goodness is something we use to describe an object/action, not what we discover in it
	+ We intuitively know what is right and wrong, not from experience
		- “*Good is good, and that is the end of the matter”*
		- Moral truths are universal and beyond human experience, and we know these intuitively and gain our morality from these
		- Need to use logic and mind to discover these truths
	+ Therefore morality is **objective** and **cognitive**
	+ We work out what is good by looking at the impacts of our actions. Whatever brings about good (which will be intuitively recognised) is good – therefore **teleological**
	+ Two types of moral ideas/statements:
		- Complex idea – can be broken down into simpler parts, e.g. “horse” can be broken down to mammal, quadruped etc.
		- Simple ideas – cannot be defined/broken down any further, e.g. good, bad, yellow
* **Pritchard**
	+ We recognise obligation – when and how to act to bring about good
	+ Some people have clearer/more developed moral intuitions than others, so not everyone can intuit moral truth
		- Clashes in morality are due to underdevelopment of moral intuition
	+ Criticism – How is it possible to develop this intuition if it is intuitive/instinctive?
* **W.D. Ross**
	+ Accepted Moore’s argument that goodness can’t be defined in natural terms
	+ In any given situation moral duties or obligations become apparent - **Prima Facie** duties (at first appearance) e.g. keeping promises, self-improvement, gratitude, justice etc
		- This makes is **deontological**
	+ Moral intuition tells us when one prima facie duty does not apply because another overrides it; moral insight tells us when we should make exceptions to specific guidelines
		- If there is an ethical dilemma where a duty is not self-evident, then intuition determines the right course of action
	+ Moral intuition tells us what prima facie duties are
	+ Moral intuition tells us what the priority rules are

Strengths

* Intuitionism arguably allows us to answer issues clearly and instantly
* It appeals to human nature - we do use our intuition to decide right from wrong
* It is very simple and avoids complex debate as to what is good - because we cannot define good

Criticisms

* Cannot prove or disprove this theory
* How do we know what is or isn’t a prima facie duty?
* Intuitionism makes ethical discussion difficult as principles are not based on reason or logic that can be argued against
* Psychological theories as proposed by Freud suggest that our intuition and morality is shaped by the people around us and experiences in childhood, therefore intuition is subjective
* Moore's intuitionism is teleological whereas Ross's is deontological - who is right?
* **Nietzsche** criticised Moore's 'yellow' analogy, and argued that one person may see good as one thing whereas one may see good as another, suggesting the issue of *"ethical colourblindness"*
* **MacIntyre** simply said that *"The word intuition is always a signal that something has gone badly wrong."*

Emotivism

* Ethical language is **non-cognitive** and **subjective**
* **A.J. Ayer** – (*Language, Truth and Logic*)
	+ Verification principle
		- Meaningful statements have to be verified either analytically or synthetically
		- Moral statements cannot be verified, therefore they are not true facts but expressions of preference or emotions
	+ Moral statements come from our emotional response to situations
		- Based on what makes us go “boo” (I don’t like this therefore this is bad) and “hurrah” (I like this therefore it is good)
		- E.g. “Giving to charity is good” means “I think giving to charity is good”
	+ They also serve the purpose of arousing feelings and stimulating actions
* **C.L. Stevenson**
	+ When moral statements are made, as well as expressing our views we are also trying to persuade other people to have the same emotional response
	+ Moral disputes reflect a disagreement in attitudes
		- As moral judgements are based on attitudes and seek to persuade, moral disagreement arises when people consider the opposing view to be wrong

Strengths

* Emotivism's subjective nature allows all opinions to be equally valid - it is egalitarian
* Culturally aware - arranged marriage, for example, could be good or bad depending on the stance of different cultures
* It effectively resolves the argument as to why moral disputes can never be resolved

Criticisms

* **James Rachel** – Ayer is trivialising right and wrong as it wrongly compares stubbing one’s toe (a boo) to a moral statement
* There are still some objective moral values, such as “murder is wrong”
* Emotivism suggests that there are no universal or absolute truths to guide society
* **Mel Thompson** – *"You cannot reduce morality to a set of cheers and boos."*
* **Alasdair MacIntyre**– emotivism wrongly places child carers and paedophiles as equals

Prescriptivism

* Ethical language is **non-cognitive** and **objective**
* **R.M. Hare** – (*Freedom and Reason*)
	+ Agrees with Ayer that when moral statements are made, we are expressing our beliefs
	+ When ethical language is used, we are prescribing a course of action (telling others how to act)
	+ When moral statements are made, we are saying this should be true for everyone
		- Therefore moral language is **objective**, moral statements are being universalised
	+ Moral language has three properties; it is:
		- Universalisable – stating ways in which all should behave
			* Example – “killing is wrong” means “no-one should kill”
		- Prescriptive – prescribes a course of action, commitments to actions
			* Example – “killing is wrong” means “don’t kill!”
		- Overriding – the moral “good” is stronger and overrides any other good
			* Example – “it is good to help my sick grandmother” has a different, stronger meaning than “it is good to take a holiday”

Strengths

* It is straight-forward
* It seems logical and realistic - when we make moral judgements we are often prescribing courses of action
* If moral commands are universalisable, they are applicable to all and thus easy to follow
* It solves the emotivist issue of moral language being meaningless - instead they are prescribed actions

Criticisms

* **Mackie** argues that if prescriptivism is culturally aware, morality cannot be universal
* Hare believes in no true or false morality, meaning that, for example, Hitler's universalised hatred of the Jews was not right or wrong
* disregards the logic and reasoning behind moral statements in favour of recommendation
* Hare's logic means that any ridiculous theory could be moral. For example, eating burgers every Monday morning could become moral if someone branded it as good
* there is no reason to follow any moral law(s) - they're simply based on what people want you to do

**Free will and Determinism**

Hard determinism – freedom means being able to act with full control (but an illusion as we don’t have this)

Libertarianism – freedom means subject to reason alone, not due to cause and effect

Soft determinism – freedom means absence of constraints

Hard determinism

* Free will is a causally determined act over which there is no control.
* Free choices are just the result of a multitude of events that led up to that choice (**deductive**):
	1. Isaac Newton – everything in the world is subject to natural and physical laws of cause and effect
	2. Science can predict reasonably well future events in accordance to laws of nature
	3. Everything is caused in the world, so if everything is known about the human mind and body, then it would be discovered that all behaviour is caused and discover these causes
	4. Therefore free will is an illusion – only think there’s free will due to lack of knowledge of causal factors.
* Free will is an illusion:
	+ **Ted Honderich** (*How Free Are You?)* – “all our choices, decisions… and our actions are no more than effects of other equally necessitated events”
	+ **John Hospers** – actions are not determined by free will but by unconscious mind
	+ **John Locke** – the example of a man in a room which is locked. He thinks he has the choice to stay in the room or leave, and he decides to stay. In actuality he didn’t have the choice to leave the room, so free will is an illusion.
* This allows people to shirk responsibility for moral acts as they had no control over actions/it is not their fault they acted in this way (no reward/punishment)
	+ **Leopold and Loeb** case (1924)
		- Clarence Darrow defended Leopold and Loeb, who had been charged with murder after deciding to commit the ‘perfect crime’.
		- Darrow argued that the boys had diminished responsibility because they were products of their upbringing. They could not possibly be blamed.
		- *"He did not make himself. And yet he is compelled to pay."*
		- *"Punishment as punishment is not admissible unless the offender has the free will to select this course."*
		- Darrow was successful and the boys were sentenced to life imprisonment as opposed to facing the death penalty.

Criticisms

* **Christianity** – the assumption that human beings are the same as material objects and subject to laws of nature is wrong; humans have God-given souls that include the faculties of free will and morality.
* Eliminates possibility of moral responsibility.
* **Hume** – even if B consistently follows after A, it is not possible/logical to argue that A causes B. Hard determinism is simply an interpretation of observations.

Libertarianism/Incompatibilism

* Choices are completely free based on free will and not determined by anything
	+ Based on observation that because we can feel guilt for actions, we must have chosen them freely
	+ Example of growing up in poverty and drugs etc, determinism would suggest that this person would also end up in these conditions, but a person deciding to leave has done so of their own conviction, therefore libertarianism.
* **Hume** (*An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*) – “by liberty then, we can only mean power of acting or not acting, according to the determination of the will”
* Moral actions are the result of character and values, so actions have moral significance.
* Can be held morally responsible
	+ Sometimes when making a difficult moral choice, the wrong moral choice may be chosen, making us responsible for consequences.
* The human personality can be affected by external factors and can limit choices, but the moral self is an ethical concept and independent of personality, which operates when making a moral choice and can overcome influences of personality
	+ Empirically backed through observation that sometimes it is difficult to make certain choices due to conflict of self-interests and moral duty.
* **Kant**
	+ The human will is autonomous; it can be capable of acting from reason instead of emotions
	+ The mind exercising reason makes humans free
	+ If we act from feelings we are slaves to passion, but if we act from logic and reasoning we can transcend feelings and other causal determinants and act free.
* **Boethius** – reason means having the power of judgement to choose what to desire and to avoid
	+ Therefore people seek what is desirable and reject what should be avoided
	+ There is freedom of desiring and shunning
	+ Clear judgment, uncorrupted will, and effective power to obtain what one desires makes a rational creature free. Being blinded by ignorance and obsessed by vicious passions makes a rational creature less free. (supports Kant)
* **Heisenberg** – uncertainty principle in physics, where events are random and not necessarily caused (challenge to determinism)
	+ **Honderich** – this randomness only works on sub-atomic level, not on human behaviour.

Strengths

* Appeals to intuition; humans prefer to see selves as free individuals rather than having no control.
* Personal responsibilty underpins main systems of law and ethics.
* Hume’s criticism for determinism – therefore libertarianism is more logical.

Criticisms

* Locke’s analogy – just because we feel free doesn’t mean we are.
* Past experiences, emotions and values have more of an influence on moral choices than libertarianism suggests.

Soft determinism/Compatibilism

* Bridges the gap between hard determinism and libertarianism; the existence of determinism does not rule out free will.
* The misconception that hard determinism and libertarianism are incompatible comes from a considerable confusion over what we mean when we say we are free.
	+ Soft determinism – acting freely means not acting under compulsion or external pressures.
	+ People act as free agents, but their actions can be caused by other factors.
* Soft determinists define freedom as the freedom to act according to one's nature which is determined by external factors (e.g. heredity, education and background).
* Values, desires and prior experiences can determine how we act in situations but we can choose to go against them and also their influences are random and uncertain so do not necessarily coerce choices
	+ We may be compelled to act in a certain way but we are still free to choose.
* Actions are governed by causes, of which there are two types:
	+ Internal causes – lead to voluntary actions of free will; the result of wishes or desires, e.g. choosing to leave country because have a desire to go abroad
	+ External causes – lead to involuntary acts of compulsion as are contrary to desires and wishes, e.g. leaving country because forced out by government (deported)
		- If no such thing as free will then this distinction and soft determinism wouldn’t work
* **Hume**
	+ Defines free will to be the “absence of constraint”, where constraints could be psychological, physical, or logical
		- Opposite of liberty (freedom) is not necessity (determinism) but constraint.
	+ Free will requires necessity (determinism) as without a cause human will would be random.
	+ Causal determinants make an action predictable, but the internal cause that is free will is enough to give freedom as long as it is not constrained (an internal constraint may be drug addiction).
	+ Ayer (*Freedom and Necessity*) – “the fact that my action may…have a cause is…irrelevant for it is not when my action has any cause at all, but only when it has a special sort of cause, that it is reckoned not to be free”
* Can be held morally responsible.
* Modern Compatibilism
	+ **Peter Vardy** – freedom is possible to achieve, but most do not
	+ “Most people are not free – they are constrained by their background and cultural conditioning”
	+ Freedom is only achieved if a person is able to understand the forces that influence their decisions and then consciously act with/against them
		- “freedom and wisdom are closely liked”
	+ **Robert Kane** – humans experience deep freedom only at times of struggle when they feel pulled in to equally possible directions; in this situation we have to exercise our minds and will to choose a self-determined path

Strength

* Most of us accept that certain elements of our lives are determined but that we have ultimate free will.
* It provides a fair and logical case for separating internal and external causes.

Criticisms

* Hard determinists would argue that soft determinism fails to understand the degree of determinism in our lives.
* Libertarians would argue that soft determinism fails to understand the degree of freedom in our lives.
* Difficult to decide what is or isn’t a determining factor – hard to do this due to complexities of science/psychology etc.

Other influences

* Psychological – **determinist**
	+ Behaviourism
		- **J.B. Watson**
			* An individual’s environment will change their moral decisions
			* Classical conditioning – if grow up in an environment of drug abuse linked to pleasure, then it is likely you too will take them as associate them.
		- **B.F. Skinner**
			* Through social conditioning actions are determined
			* E.g. operant conditioning (positive/negative reinforcers) and punishment
			* Behaviour is a consequence of environmental histories of reinforcement
			* No human responsibility as it is beyond us to act otherwise to how we do.
	+ **Freud**
		- Experiences in childhood determine our behaviour in later life
		- Repressed traumas give rise to later problems e.g. falling off a horse when little, won’t remember it but in adulthood develop phobia of horses
	+ **Sowell**
		- Social conditioning – actions are define by societal factors e.g. laws, religion
		- “the Human self is infinitely plastic”
		- Upbringing, education etc. determine actions as we are powerless and subject to these factors; we go along with what society expects of us.
* Genetics
	+ Actions determined by genes
	+ Other factors can influence behaviour but genes control the majority of who we are/what we do
	+ Emotions such as love, jealousy and guilt are built into humans genetically
	+ This theory allows for moral responsibility as part of evolution process was to develop sense of morality.
* Environmental determinism
	+ Geography and climate have the greatest influences on actions/morality
	+ Equatorial paradox – the further away a country is from the equator, the more developed it is
	+ This could be due to the higher need for agricultural etc. development in cooler climates, so these people are more hard-working than those in warmer climates in order to prosper.

Predestination/Theological determinism

* God is omniscient and transcendent, therefore knows the past, present and future.
* This means God will know who ascends to heaven/goes to hell determined by their actions in life.
* Whatever we do we cannot escape our fate and God’s judgement, so even if we try to be good there is no chance of getting into heaven if God has not foreseen this – no such thing as free will.
* **St Paul** – God has pre-destined certain souls to join Him in heaven.
* **St Augustine** – only those chosen by God have the chance of joining Him in heaven
	+ “the potter has authority over the clay”
	+ **Pelagius** – all humans come into the world in the conditions of Adam, so sinlessness can be achieved if God-given free will is used correctly; salvation through actions (Pelagianism)
	+ **Augustine** – freedom has become limited after The Fall, and sin of Adam passed down. A need for God’s grace due to limitations on free will.
* **Calvinism**
	+ Man is inherently evil, so there is the illusion of free will because if there was free will man would only reject God
	+ This means God has to predetermine who will be saved – rejects Pelagianism
		- Are these the actions of an omnibenevolent God?
* These views mean that humans cannot be held morally responsible

Alternative

* Traditional view is that God created humans as free autonomous agents, seen where Eve decided to eat the apple – can choose to sin or do good
* **Aquinas** (*Summa Theologica*) – man is created free “man chooses not of necessity but freely”
* **Swinburne** (The Existence of God) – to say God is all-knowing implies that He knows all that it possible to know
	+ Then logically He cannot know the outcome of a free decision before it is made
* **Jean-Paul Sartre**
	+ Man is “condemned to be free”
	+ Humans have free will because there is no God to fall back on and guide
	+ Therefore fully responsible for actions
	+ There is no predestination, so there is no other option than to be free
	+ Anything else is just an excuse to pass off responsibility

**Conscience**

Christian attitudes

* Gift from God, following Divine Law
* **St Paul**
	+ Conscience is “the requirements of the law are written on their hearts” – *Romans 2-15*
	+ This means know right from wrong naturally
	+ Conscience can be fallible and weak at times, hence why some slip into temptation
		- Why didn’t God create the conscience perfect?
* **St Jerome**
	+ Conscience is “with which we discern our sin”
	+ How to know when we’ve done something wrong
* **St Augustine**
	+ Conscience is actual communication with God, and the voice of God in our hearts
		- If this is so, why can the conscience sometimes inform wrongly? Why do people hear different things? God is telling some to do bad?
* **St Thomas Aquinas**
	+ It is a tool given by God to make ethical decisions; it does not give answers
	+ “it is always right to follow your conscience”
	+ Synderesis rule – tend towards doing good and avoid doing evil
	+ Conscientia – application of synderesis; “reason making right decisions”
	+ Evil came from shortcomings in conscience
		- A mistake in the path from synderesis to conscientia
		- Incorrect use of synderesis
		- Bad reasoning or weak will
		- If have no control over conscience, does this mean there is no responsibility for actions?
* **Butler** – intuitionism
	+ Conscience is God-given
	+ "approval and disapproval of actions... this principle in man is conscience."
	+ the fact we reflect on our own behaviour shows the existence of conscience, guilt
	+ The final arbiter in a struggle to include others’ interest
	+ Influenced by self-love and benevolence
	+ Conscience moves us to focus on others (benevolence) rather than just ourselves
	+ Conscience is like instinct – “our natural guide assigned to us by the author of nature”

Criticisms

* Religious argument has inconsistencies – Aquinas argues conscience is not direct voice of God, but Catholicism, St Augustine etc. say it is direct voice
	+ If it is the direct voice, why do people disagree in moral dilemmas? (give example)
* Some people appear to have no apparent conscience, e.g. child killers of Jamie Bulger have no guilt
* Atheists and humanists claim that the religious perspective is narrow-minded as it refuses to accept that conscience is an effect of social conditioning, experience and psychological development

Secular approaches

* **Freud**
	+ Conscience is a construct of the mind
	+ The id (selfish desire), ego (realistic faculty) and superego (moral conscience) are in constant conflict, sometimes id overpowers superego – this leads to an immoral conscience
	+ Humans have no direct control over these faculties, so can have an immoral conscience without realising
* **Piaget**
	+ Conscience is learnt from external sources
	+ Heteronymous morality – up to the age of 10, gain conscience and morality from parents
	+ Autonomous morality – after age of 10, develop own sense of morality from wider society
* **Fromm**
	+ Authoritarian conscience – morality comes from sources of authority (e.g. parent, teacher etc.). internalise these nuggets of morality so they form our own morality
		- Guilt came from a fear of upsetting those in authority
		- This type of conscience can lead to immoral acts by trying to please those in authority (e.g. Holocaust)
	+ Humanistic conscience – a different stage of conscience that not everyone develops
		- “the reaction of ourselves to ourselves; the voice of our true selves”
		- Being to assess our behaviour and compare selves to others
		- If we don’t measure favourably then modify behaviour to become better people
		- This is an optimistic view as humanity sometimes attempts to achieve morality, sometimes people in control of selves
* **Dawkins**
	+ Humans have self-promoting genes that encourage survival; the selfish gene
	+ Humans also evolved altruism (concern for others) to enable survival, as co-operation is more successful that competition – called this the lust to be nice
		- “we have the capacity to transcend our selfish genes”
	+ Therefore conscience is biologically programmed

Criticisms – Doesn’t say how to get definitive answers to moral dilemmas; misses the practicality of conscience

**Virtue Ethics**

Agent-centred, focused on individual development; the intentions of an action is key, outcome is irrelevant

**Aristotle** (*Nichomachean* *Ethics*)

* Purpose of life is to reach eudaimonia (greatest happiness, human flourishing), achieved by practicing skills and virtues. Requires:
	+ Happiness as a life of enjoyment and pleasure
	+ Happiness as a member of free society
	+ Happiness as a philosopher
* To do right actions requires a right character. Character (ethos) developed by **emulation** (copying), **education** (wisdom and understanding) and **experience** (learning from mistakes)
* This is achieved by developing virtues
	+ “Virtue, then, is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean”
* Types of virtue
	+ Intellectual virtues (taught) – developing these excels in sophia (intellectual excellence)
	+ Moral virtues (experienced) – developing these excels in phronesis (prudence)
* Cardinal virtues (**Aquinas** – *Summa Theologica*)
	+ **Justice**
	+ **Temperance** (moderation)
	+ **Fortitude** (courage)
	+ **Prudence** (wisdom or phronesis)
* Golden mean/doctrine of the mean
	+ Avoid the vices; deficiency and excess of virtues
	+ Virtue is the balance of two extremes; the desirable middle

Strengths

* Virtue ethics appeals to both religious and secular approaches to morality; no need for faith/religion
* It doesn’t have strict prescriptive rules (such as Kantian ethics or Natural Law), so avoids pitfalls of absolutist theories such as being forced to do something despite a negative outcome
* Aimed at helping society as it tries to eliminate vices that could harm society
* Looks at individuals as opposed to actions, so increases self-worth

Criticisms

* Everybody has different goals and motives; it is nonsensical to say we all work to a common good
* There are cultural differences in what is seen to be virtuous, e.g. having a young wife. Who is right?
* If virtues clash, how is it determined which one takes precedence?
* “Excess” and “deficiency” are too subjective – how is it possible to know when bravery becomes recklessness?
* Society may benefit from extremes of character
	+ Need vices to recognise virtues
	+ **Susan Wolf** – vices make the world more interesting
* As the outcome is irrelevant, virtues can lead to immoral acts, e.g. loyalty to Hitler and killing Jews
	+ Counter – **Philippa Foot**: a virtue is not virtuous if it is used to a bad end
* **Keenan** – What sort of virtuous person should one become – compassionate or controlled?

Modern virtue ethics

* **Elizabeth Anscombe** (*Modern Moral Philosophy*)
	+ Other moral theories where morality is based on duty (such as Kant, Natural Law and Utilitarianism) are flawed
	+ These require a belief in God or an ultimate being who will judge. Without this belief there is no reason to follow moral duty
	+ This supports Aristotle’s argument, and makes is stronger compared to Kant etc.
* **Alisdair MacIntyre** (*After* *Virtue*)
	+ Good judgment emanates from good character. Being a good person is not about seeking to follow formal rules (against absolutist ethics)
	+ Moral goods or virtues are defined in respect to a community which practice them—which he calls 'internal goods' or 'goods of excellence'
	+ It is illogical to focus on practice-independent moral duties/obligations (**deontological**/Kantian ethics) or the consequences of actions (**teleological**/Utilitarianism) as these have no role in communities
* **Philippa Foot**
	+ Goodness is the natural flourishing of humans
	+ Virtues are beneficial to the individual and to the community
* **Richard Taylor**
	+ Religious ethics lead people away from using their reason, prevents personal development
	+ Christianity and other religious ethics claim that the poor, weak, stupid and evil will go to Heaven if they accept Christ
	+ This does not encourage people to become better, it only encourages blind faith
	+ Virtue ethics addresses this as it encourages people to achieve personal excellence

**Business and Environmental Ethics**

Business Ethics

* Business ethics concerns the relationship between business and stakeholders
	+ **Adam Smith** – the employer has a responsibility to employees; employees should be hired fairly and employers have to avoid selfishness.
		- This is a mutually beneficial relationship; employees need work and employers need workers
	+ **Karl Marx** – employers (the bourgeoisie) will always be able to find workers, so the employees (the proletariats) have to work to the employers terms or go without work
		- Employers have the power, employees only have labour to bargain with and if that is withdrawn they will not survive
	+ Business are encouraged to consider stakeholders’ needs (e.g. workers, consumers) as well as stockholders
	+ Whistleblowing
		- Should an employee be loyal to their employer even if they are aware of criminal or unethical practice?
		- Example – AstraZeneca whistle-blower Jim Wetta uncovered that sales reps were promoting an antipsychotic drug for schizophrenia for a wide range of less serious disorders (e.g. aggression, anxiety). Promoting drugs not medically accepted to treat conditions is fraud
* Purpose of business
	+ **Milton Friedman** – “The purpose of business is to make money”
	+ **Maxwell** – “There is no such thing as business ethics”
		- Meaning there are no moral obligations for business and employers/shareholders.
	+ **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** – to be morally responsible for corporate actions and to the environment and stakeholders (consumers, employees, investors, communities, and others)
		- Example – the Body Shop which tackles animal rights and Fair Trade issues.
	+ **Stakeholder Theory** (**Will Hutton**) – all stakeholders should have a share in the business.
	+ **Adam Smith and ethical egoism**
		- Business are “led by an invisible hand”, which is the price mechanism that leads to price rises when there is a shortage, and price reductions when there is competition
		- Consumer choice drives the market into a “win-win” situation, where consumers want fair prices and good quality and this leads to businesses that provide good quality and fairly priced products being rewarded
			* Consumers save money and businesses make profits
		- This “win-win” view is **utilitarian**, but Smith argues that self-interest is not selfishness (**ethical egoism**) – by pursuing self-interest, a person is putting the business first, which can serve the common good of others (e.g. stakeholders)
		- **Louis Pojman** – “We are concerned to promote our own good, but not necessarily at any cost”
			* **Julian Baggini** – “Good ethics is not necessarily good business”
* Issues in business
	+ Exploitation
		- Customers may get exploited by monopolies who charge high prices in the absence of competition
			* Example – the Competition Commission threatened legal action against BskyB to lose their monopoly over football broadcasts
		- Workers may get exploited by large companies where there is no choice but to accept the low wage
			* Example – Sweatshops in developing countries
	+ Externalities
		- Negative externalities are external costs created by the company but affect others
		- These include noise, pollution and congestion
			* Example – in 1996 Trafigura dumped tonnes of toxic waste off the Ivory Coast, which caused burns and nausea and the release of toxic sulphur dioxide
		- These can be dealt with easily though
			* Example – the Anglo-American Mining Company situated mines away from residents to reduce noise pollution
	+ Government regulations
		- Milton Friedman argues that business pursues profit subject to limits set down by law. Businesses serve owners/shareholders, so governments should set social policy
		- This can lead to unethical business practices
			* Example – Union Carbide pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, leaked a chemical that killed 8,000 in 3 days
			* The Indian government encouraged a dismissal of health and safety as there are no health and safety regulations imposed
			* Individuals only received about $1000 each, but there was still evidence of birth defects, liver and kidney disease etc.
	+ Globalisation
		- **Crane & Matten** – globalisation is “deterritorisation”; location is now irrelevant
		- Example – sweatshops, where first-world companies are setting up factories in third-world countries to maximise profits and savings
			* These may be good as they create jobs…
			* However they are exploitative; the workers in LEDCs do not receive fair wages compared to MEDCs
			* Transnational companies respond with the argument that the cost of living in LEDCs is lower than in MEDCs, so they are still making enough
			* This also takes jobs away as by Nike closing a factory in the US and opening one in Indonesia, US citizens are being made redundant
		- This means that ethics is becoming international in focus
			* **Peter Singer** – companies/governments can no longer argue “we need to do what is best in the national interest” due to globalisation; ethics need to address global issues
* Ethical responses
	+ **Kantian ethics**
		- Categorical imperative
		- Maxim of universalisation – businesses should have practices that are best for all businesses and can be applied to all
			* Example – moving all call centres to India is impractical
			* Example – giving all employees some shares can be made universal
		- People as ends – people (customers, employees etc.) should be the ends, not used as a means to an end (e.g. profit)
			* Against sweatshops; workers are not commodities/indispensible
			* Supports Corporate Social Responsibility
		- Criticisms
			* It’s not practical to put people over profits; businesses would fail
			* Consequences are not considered; it is not possible to run a business without looking at outcomes, especially if deciding if they’re good or bad
			* Kant says duties are unbreakable, but what if duties conflict, e.g. to shareholders or employees?
	+ **Utilitarianism**
		- **Bentham** (Act)/consequentialism
			* Greatest amount of pleasure for the greatest amount of people (hedonism)
				+ It is logical to argue that financial stability makes the majority more happy. Sustainability/CSR would be seen as good because it makes more people happy
				+ Sweatshops can be justified?
			* The use of the hedonic calculus translates well to cost-benefit analysis
				+ However this does not always lead to ethical business practices
				+ Example – Ford Pinto design fault that would cause the fuel tank to explode upon collision. A cost-benefit analysis showed that a recall would be more costly than paying out compensation to those affected (injury or death). Ford didn’t recall the cars
			* Criticisms
			* Can justify the majority exploiting the minority
			* Human life is measured against profit?
			* Can allow for theft/corruption if it benefits more people (e.g. shareholders) than it harms
		- **Mill**
			* Money/profit is a lower pleasure, doing what is best for others/society is a higher pleasure
		- **Singer** (preference)
			* A fair trade approach would benefit the most amount of people
	+ **Christian Ethics**
		- Taking care of those we are in relations with is a God-given duty
		- Christians argue that businesspeople should adopt a Christ-like character in business and strive for excellence
		- May be a good approach to business ethics as demonstrated by Quaker religious people such as Cadbury (built a village and housing for his workers) and Rowntree who founded the John Rowntree Charitable Trust
	+ **Virtue Ethics**
		- If business owners follow virtues and try to be more virtuous when running a business, it can lead to a more virtuous and ethically moral business
			* Example – a business founded on compassion and justice would automatically result in stakeholders being treated fairly and development being sustainable
		- Whether or not a business is profitable is arguably of no concern to virtue ethics; it is agent-centred, therefore the outcome of these virtuous acts on the success of a business is irrelevant
		- Criticisms
			* Which virtues should be followed?
				+ **Machiavelli** argues that virtues are context-dependent; e.g. deceit and violence are virtues in war as they lead to a successful end
			* Virtues vary culturally, meaning it is not applicable to globalisation
			* Which virtuous businesspeople should be emulated – e.g. the owner of Starbucks, a company famous for tax evasion?

Environmental Ethics

* **John Lovelock** (*The Ages of Gaia*)– Gaia Hypothesis
	+ Eco-holism – the belief that all aspect of the eco system should be respected and treated as one (holistic) intrinsically-valuable entity
	+ The Gaia hypothesis states that the earth is a living organism
	+ The earth is able to regulate itself in favour of life; it has a sense of instinctive survival
		- It is non-teleological and seeks only for equilibrium; in this sense humans have no particular priority or significance
	+ Rejects Darwin’s evolution theory; there is no survival of the fittest. By looking at fossils, this is evidence that shows that life prevails despite catastrophic events (e.g. the ice age or whatever wiped out the dinosaurs). Gaia permitted life to continue and not end
	+ Unless humans rectify the damage caused to the environment, Gaia may retaliate against us
	+ **Dawkins** – evolution is more conceivable than the Gaia hypothesis
		- It shows life adapts to survive in the environment, not that the environment changes to allow the survival of species
	+ **Lynn Margulis** – Gaia and evolution can be compatible if symbiosis is accepted; in the pursuit of survival life forms may join with other life forms, e.g. pilot fish cleaning sharks teeth in exchange for protection. This therefore brings some of the ideas of Darwinism closer to the ideas of the Gaia hypothesis
* Deep ecology/libertarianism
	+ All life forms have intrinsic value
	+ Anthropocentric theories are speciesist
	+ **George Sessions** argues for deep ecology and puts forward 8 ways necessary to look after the environment:
		1. **all life has intrinsic value**
		2. diversity creates well-being of all
		3. humans must protect this responsibility
		4. **human impact on the environment is excessive**
		5. lifestyle and population change are critical
		6. **human impact must be reduced**
		7. political and economic systems must change
		8. **those who accept the above must commit to peaceful change**
	+ **Arne** **Naess** – all living things have rights and humans are not superior but have a place in the ecosphere (ecosophy)
		- It is important to preserve the biosphere for its own sake
		- No species has the right to claim dominance (against Christian idea of stewardship)
		- In order to preserve the environment humans should:
			* Significantly reduce their population
			* Abandon goals for economic growth
			* Live in small, self-reliant communities
			* “touch the earth lightly”
		- Criticisms – too radical; it is not possible to show that all levels of the ecosystem are equally valuable. Unrealistic; this is not achievable in contemporary society
	+ **Aldo Leopold** – the social conscience of humans should extend to the environment
		- An action is good if it “tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community” – *A Sand County Almanac*

Criticisms

* For something to have rights it must have reasons for existence - do plants have their own reason for existence? Our reason for their existence is for oxygen and food - but do they have reasons of their own?
* Deep ecology is arguably misanthropic (human-hating) and discourages a growing population
	+ However, deep ecologists would argue that by decreasing the population, the value of each individual increases
* If followed to the extreme, deep ecology could lead to the destruction of the human race
	+ This a nonsensical and illogical weakness as it is hyperbolic; humans have intrinsic worth too
* Earth summits and subsequent treaties such as Kyoto Protocol have proved not to be very effective, raising questions about the practicality of **Sessions'** 8-point manifesto
* Shallow ecology/conservationism
	+ Plants and non-human animals only have instrumental value to humans
	+ Only humans have intrinsic value; anthropocentrism
	+ **La** **Bossiere** – this can be justified as part of the natural order of evolution, i.e. an animal becoming extinct due to human activities can be deemed as nature taking its course.
		- He is not suggesting that humans should try and wipe out species, however extinction is a consequence of humanity’s actions it is acceptable
	+ **Aristotle** – everything has a purpose or telos
		- “plants exist for the sake of animals…all other animals exist for the sake of man” *Politics*
		- Starts to give rise to the view that humans can use the environment to whatever end they want
* Ethical responses
	+ Christian ethics
		- Dominion
			* God created humans in his image with dominion over the earth and creatures
			* “let them have dominion... over all the wild animals of the earth” Genesis 1:26
			* This is anthropocentric and places humans at the top of a hierarchy
			* Previously interpreted as “ownership”, which is in line with shallow ecology; humans can use the earth however they want
			* **Osborne** – "de-divine" nature and take God out of it as a concept
				+ Advocates dominion but stated that dominion isn't the same as domination
				+ Mankind should have a covenant (contract) with nature
		- Stewardship
			* God has given humanity the responsibility to care and look after the environment
			* Humanity is answerable to God for the use of His creation, so must look after all aspects of it
			* Christians believe humans are the pinnacle of God’s creation, with the ability to reason and to be moral. Therefore they have a duty to be:
				+ “Courteous, tolerant, humble just and in awe of the creation that God has entrusted to us” – **Adolpho Masteranti**
		- Creation spirituality
			* God can be found in his creation (panentheism)
			* St. Francis of Assisi – God can be seen in all of His creation, so to harm or destroy anything is a direct sin
			* Humanity is part of the whole of creation, rather than separate to it
		- Consequence of sin
			* **St. Augustine** – Original Sin has had a negative effect on the relationship between God and humanity
			* This has also negatively affected human’s relationship with God’s creation
			* In order to resolve this breakdown, stewardship should be adopted
			* **Fox** – the suffering of nature is present because mankind is alienated from nature
				+ In order to breach the gap between humanity and nature, humans should 'befriend' nature and treat it as a gift and befriend darkness (non-human pain)
	+ **Kant**
		- “animals…are there merely as means to an end. That end is man” – *Lecture on Ethics*
		- Universalisability – it is moral to advocate all humans to care for the environment
		- Humans should treat non-rational beings with respect as it would make it easier to be respectful to all beings
		- There is a duty not to destroy the environment as it could lead to harm to rational beings
			* E.g. destroying rainforests ruins an indigenous tribes’ lifestyle
		- **Paul Taylor** – animals and nature should be given legal rights for protection, but not moral rights as they are not rational
	+ Utilitarianism (**conservationists – instrumental value**)
		- Bentham (act)
			* Hedonism – it is acceptable to use the environment in any way that benefits the majority, even if this leads to damage to the environment.
			* However future generations must also be considered as they are the majority, therefore care must be taken of the environment.
		- Mill (rule)
			* Protection of the environment is a higher pleasure as it ensures the well-being and pleasure of future generations.
			* Environmental protection leads to no suffering of anyone, therefore it is moral.
		- Singer (preference)
			* Neither a deep nor shallow ecologist.
			* Against anthropocentrism – speciesism “draws an arbitrary line”
			* Ethics is not only for humans – sentient creatures suffering pain due to humans is unethical.
			* Considers future generations, so the environment should be preserved so all can enjoy it.
	+ Virtue ethics
		- If human flourishing (eudaimonia) is the ultimate goal, then the environment needs to be preserved and looked after to allow this
		- Becoming a virtuous person and reaching eudaimonia involves understanding the human role in the environment
		- Emulating virtuous people will often lead to caring for the environment e.g. Theodore Roosevelt
		- Animals etc. only have instrumental value – “plants exist for the sake of animals…all other animals exist for the sake of man” - *Politics*

Environment and Business

* Sustainability
	+ This is the main area to discuss the relationship between business and environment
	+ The sustainable use of resources (such as electricity, paper) as opposed to the excessive use which can’t be replenished
	+ This ensures that future generations are not adversely affected
	+ It also often saves money in businesses
	+ By applying other ethical approaches to business, they would advocate sustainability as it leads to care for the environment
* **Corporate Social Responsibility** would lead to businesses taking care of the environment as businesses should be morally responsible for their actions that affect others
* **Singer** – advocates the greatest amount of good for all including species
	+ Therefore businesses should maintain ethical practices that benefit the environment as well as people/stakeholders
	+ Example - The Anglo-American Mining Company planted reed beds (an endangered habitat) in their local community to help sustain the environment
* **Mill** – concerning businesses, looking after environment and being sustainable is a higher pleasure than just making profit
* **Christianity** – the concept of stewardship means businesses must protect environment as well as stakeholders as it is a God-given duty
	+ However if a dominion approach is adopted, then business have no moral responsibility to concern themselves with environmentally-good business practices

**Sexual Ethics**

Includes homosexuality, contraception, sex before marriage, adultery, sex for pleasure/procreation, divorce

Christian views

Marriage and sex – includes sex for pleasure/procreation and contraception, sex before marriage

* Old Testament
	+ Adam and Eve were commanded by God to “be fruitful and increase in number” *Genesis 1:28*
	+ Sex was also intrinsically good and God intended it to be pleasurable
	+ After the Fall, sex stopped being intrinsically good
		- “I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you” *Genesis 3:16*
		- Sex is still meant to be pleasurable, but it is also intended for procreation
* New Testament
	+ **Jesus’** teachings were primarily on love and equality
	+ **St. Paul**
		- He advocated celibacy as a state of holiness as he believed that Jesus’ second coming was soon
		- However if people felt the need to give into passion, he stated that they should marry first
			* “it is better to marry than to burn with passion” *1 Corinthians 7:9*
		- St. Paul tried to promote Jesus’ teachings, but also follow society at that time, which led to contradictory teachings
			* “there is neither Jew or Greek…male nor female, for all are one in Christ Jesus” *Galatians 3:28*
			* “Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says” *1 Corinthians 14:34*
			* **Florenza** – Paul presents women to be at a lower level than men, which means that his teachings are often conflicting with other ones on the bible
			* **Jocelyn Burrows** (a Christian feminist) – these teachings are at the heart of the oppression women suffered for thousands of years
* **Augustine**
	+ The Fall was the origin of sexual lust and passion
	+ Before this, sex was an act of will. Now it is seen as a loss of sexual control
	+ Sex was for marriage and should be done out of duty to procreate, not for pleasure
		- Against contraception
* **Aquinas**
	+ Sex can be enjoyed but it’s purpose is for reproduction, which must be fulfilled
		- Against contraception
		- Is sex still good if the wife reaches menopause? What about sex during pregnancy?
* **Catholicism/Natural Law**
	+ **Aquinas** and natural law
		- Primary precepts are **absolute** and all actions must adhere to them
			* 1 – preserve life
			* 2 – procreate
			* 3 – educate
			* 4 – live peacefully in society
			* 5 – worship God
		- Sex must fulfil these purposes, and in order to worship God sex must only be in marriage
		- The use of contraception is immoral as it prevents the secondary precept
			* However contraception may be necessary to live peacefully in society e.g. to stop the spread of AIDS and other STDs
	+ Catholicism
		- Follows natural law, so sex must lead to procreation or the chance of reproduction, and must take place in marriage
		- In marriage there must be fides (faithfulness), proles (reproduction) and sacramentum (two becoming one flesh)
			* Sex is only for marriage, and then it must lead to all of these
			* Premarital or extra-marital sex, sex for pleasure (and masturbation), contraception are all immoral
* Liberal Protestantism
	+ The bible is not meant to be read literally, and it gives guidance rather than absolute laws
	+ Time and culture has changed too, so attitudes must also change
	+ Some say sex before marriage and cohabitation is acceptable in modern society, so is the use of contraception

Divorce /adultery

* Old Testament
	+ Fidelity was not a major concern
		- In Genesis, Jacob has 12 sons by his 2 wives and their handmaidens, who became the 12 tribes of Israel
	+ In other ancient societies, the more land and sons a man had the more powerful he was perceived to be; it didn’t matter if his sons were from his wife or other women
	+ A man could instigate divorce, but not a woman – *Deuteronomy 24:1*
* New Testament
* Jesus says little about sexual relations, but does see sexual immorality as “making us unclean from within” *Mark 7:21*
	+ In Matthew, Jesus permits divorce in the case of adultery
	+ But teachings are unclear – “whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery” *Mark 10:11*
		- However “and” can be interpreted as “in order to”
* Catholicism
	+ In marriage, there must be fides, proles and sacramentum
		- Adultery is highly immoral as it goes against God’s purpose of marriage
		- Divorce is also immoral and not allowed because in marriage two have become one, so they are inseparable. By divorcing and marrying another, adultery is being committed
* Situation ethics
	+ **Joseph Fletcher** – we should always seek to do the most loving action (what promotes the well-being of people)
	+ If divorce is the most loving thing to do, then it is permissible
	+ This is a relativist approach, so the situation must be analysed
	+ Adultery is not the most loving thing to do, therefore it is immoral

Homosexuality

* Generally, it is against homosexuality
	+ “You shall not lie with a man as with a woman…that is an abomination” Leviticus 13:22
	+ St. Paul – “unnatural relations…men committing shameless acts with men” Romans 1:27
	+ Example of Sodom and Gomorrah being subject to God’s divine retribution for the citizens engaging in immoral acts of homosexuality and other “crimes against nature”
	+ Christianity has often pre-supposed itself as the cure; follow Jesus and it will go
		- Based on the idea that homosexuality is a choice
* Catholicism
	+ Procreation is the purpose of sex, so the lack of a child being produced means that homosexuality is immoral and relationships have no worth
	+ The sin is the act, if there are homosexual feelings then it is part of God’s test and one must abstain
* Protestantism/Libertarianism
	+ The act is wrong, but the person still has “sacred worth”
		- As Augustine said – have “due love for the persons and hatred of the sin”
	+ Liberal (CofE) – as long as the relationship is a committed and loving one and is monogamous, then it can be as highly regarded as a heterosexual one
	+ If all people were created in the image of God, then God must have created some people gay, therefore it is still good
* Criticisms
	+ These views are not applicable to atheists
	+ There is no empirical evidence to suggest a homophobic God in the first place
	+ The Bible is an out-dated document written in an out-dated time - humanity has moved on
		- In this sense the liberal/protestant view is more applicable
	+ There are different interpretations of the Bible, meaning that Christian views as a whole are not entirely useful
	+ There is subjectivity/conflicting ideas of what love is

Kant – (*Lectures on Ethics*)

* Marriage and sex
	+ “sexual love is a degradation of human nature”
		- This is due to sex being based on passion and emotion, which is against the categorical imperative and against the use of reason
	+ Sex goes against the 2nd maxim of humans as ends, because someone is the object of another’s lust and is used to gain pleasure
	+ However in the contract of marriage sex is fine
		- Kant argued this because marriage is a contract of equals, where “two persons become a unity of wills”
		- This is to say that in marriage people surrender their rights to another, and by doing this they become unified and have “the right to dispose over the other person”, i.e. to use them to gain sexual pleasure
			* After the union of two people into one by marriage, there cannot be any use of one person by another
		- This unification also ensures that in the marriage bed, spouses treat each other as ends to a mean as well as means to an end
		- This means that sex before marriage is immoral
		- Challenge – Mary Ann Gardell argues that by this Kant transforms an otherwise selfish and hedonistic act into one that is “altruistic in character”
	+ The use of contraception would become a hypothetical imperative, as it is used to achieve an outcome (to avoid pregnancy)
	+ Furthermore, the sexual act must be intrinsically good, as to do it to procreate also becomes the hypothetical imperative
* Divorce/adultery
	+ It may be right to make divorce universalisable in the eventuality that the marriage has broken down
	+ The unification of man and woman in marriage may mean that divorce seems wrong
		- However Kant did not specify if this was to be a life-long commitment, therefore if the marriage has broken down and cannot be reconciled, Kantians may say divorce is acceptable
	+ A person does not that the right to have sex with another person unless they are married, therefore adultery is wrong
		- Sex would become the hypothetical imperative, and use people as a means to an end
* Homosexuality
	+ According to Kant, a homosexual person “no longer deserves to be a person” as it debases humans to animals; it is **contra naturam** (against nature) so it is simply a result of uncontrolled sexual desire
	+ Homosexuality cannot be universalised, as only a minority of people are gay and this would damage the human race, therefore Kant would argue it is immoral
		- However what if the continuation of the human race isn’t the “end”? What if love is the “end”?
			* This would mean that homosexuality could be permissible
			* Universal law of “it is always right to love someone in a consenting relationship”
	+ A further challenge – sex in heterosexual relationships often has the purpose of procreation, whereas sex in homosexual relationships is not used for this end
		- Sex in homosexual relationships may be condoned more than in heterosexual relationships as it is not used for an end
			* Counter-challenge: However the end could be pleasure, so still wrong
* Criticisms
	+ Ignores emotions as this leads to the hypothetical imperative, however couples initially have sex due to feelings of love and trust. According to Kant, is there no need of this in relationships, although these are important aspects?
	+ **MacIntyre** (a virtue ethicist) – it is possible to universalise anything for personal situations

Utilitarianism

* Marriage and sex
	+ A **libertarian** view as it allows people free choice
	+ Pleasure is the intrinsic good, so sex for pleasure is acceptable
		- This means it is not necessary to be married; sex outside marriage is permissible
	+ Sex must be in line with contractarianism – sex must be a consensual act, so rape would be immoral
		- But is consent enough? Sex with minors is still illegal
	+ Sex must also be in line with the harm principle – no one must be harmed, so rape/sexual coercion is ruled out
	+ **Mill** – sex is a lower pleasure, but freedom of expression and liberty are higher pleasures. These must be combined with contractarianism and the harm principle to guide on what is sexually right and wrong
		- Example – the freedom to have sex with a spouse to express love and commitment is a higher pleasure
			* The desire to have sex simply for pleasure is a lower pleasure, and this could lead to immoral acts (such as rape)
			* The best approach is to combine higher pleasures with lower pleasures
	+ The use of contraception is permissible as it often benefits/brings happiness to all
		- If contraception wasn’t used, then a negative outcome might be to abortion due to an unwanted pregnancy, which may upset some people
* Divorce/adultery
	+ **Bentham** – seeks happiness for the greatest amount of people
		- If divorce makes the most people happy then it is acceptable
		- However this can also allow adultery/polygamy, as this may lead to more people being happy than being unhappy
	+ **Mill** – the avoidance of pain for every individual is the most important
		- Therefore adultery is immoral as leads to the harm of at least one person
	+ Divorce is permissible by all if it leads to greater happiness/pleasure
* Homosexuality
	+ Contractarianism – if sex between homosexuals is consensual then it is fine
	+ Harm principle – is no harm is done then it is fine
		- However there may be damage to society, e.g. if everyone was gay
	+ Cultural relativism – in some societies homosexuality is illegal and people from that culture disagree with it
		- In this sense, it would cause more unhappiness than happiness
		- However Bentham argues that those who condemn homosexuality mostly do so out of prejudice and religious indoctrination rather than actual reason

Virtue ethics

* Marriage and sex
	+ The focus is on the moral development of the individual, so if by having sex virtues such as compassion, love, commitment/loyalty, trust and honour are being developed, then sex can only be good
		- If sex before marriage still leads to the same levels of commitment and love in marriage then it is fine
	+ If it doesn’t lead to these things then it is bad
		- If sex before marriage is solely for pleasure rather than an act in a loving relationship then it is bad
	+ Likewise, if using contraception enables the development of virtues then it is good
	+ Most people with virtues others should emulate advocate the use of contraception, especially in third-world countries such as Africa where the risk of AIDS is high
* Divorce/adultery
	+ Virtue ethics can allow any sexual act as long as it morally develops the individual to reach eudaimonia
		- This could lead to premising acts that may harm others such as polygamy/adultery
			* However if it is hurting others then virtues such as love and trust are not being developed
		- Aristotle argued that adultery was wrong; “For husband or wife to be detected in the commission of adultery… [the act] must be made a matter of disgrace” – *Politics*
			* This is because it subverts virtues and attacks the political foundations of society (the family makes society)
	+ If divorce develops virtues it is good
* Homosexuality
	+ The same virtues that can be developed in a heterosexual relationship (e.g. love, commitment etc.) can be developed in a homosexual one
		- Therefore, it is alright as long as the person is in a committed relationship
	+ **Rosalind Hursthouse**
		- A virtuous person is one that exercises virtues
		- A virtue is a character trait that will lead to eudaimonia
		- Four ends that virtues should follow to enable flourishing:
			* Desire for own survival
			* Continuation of the human race
			* Seeking enjoyment and the avoidance of pain
			* The desire to live a full life in a well-functioning society
		- She seems to imply that homosexuality is wrong because it does not enable the continuation of the human race
			* **Roger Scruton** – homosexuals cannot produce children, therefore they have no interest in society; they are simply indulging their carnal desires
			* This means that it is not virtuous. It is best to redirect their sexuality and energies towards useful work that will benefit society
			* Hursthouse rejects this – homosexuality is not a character trait, instead the virtue of tempereance should be discussed in place of homo/heterosexuality
			* Homosexuality is only un-virtuous if there is no moderation
			* The fact that it does not lead to children is irrelevant
	+ **Aristotle** argued a point similar to Scruton; that homosexual conduct is intrinsically immoral, contra naturam
	+ In *Politics*, he argues that the “state is composed of households”, a household being a united man and woman practicing chastity and having children to continue society
		- Without household, there would be no state and eudaimonia would not be achievable
	+ Homosexuality would therefore be absurd and immoral to Aristotle as in a homosexual relationship the family would dissipate and society would be harmed