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The Mudd Journal of Ethics

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MUDD CENTER *for* ETHICS

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The Mudd Journal of Ethics Editing Team

Editor-in-Chief

Alex Farley '19 is a junior from Houston, Texas. He is a pursuing a double major in Philosophy and Economics. Alex is a member of University Singers, Washington and Lee's premier choral ensemble, and General Admissions, the university's premier coed A Capella group. This summer, Alex is researching how social networks impact ethical leadership. After college, Alex hopes to either attend law school or graduate school for philosophy.

Assistant Editors

Kiera Judge '18 is a senior from Kennett Square, PA. She is graduating with majors in Philosophy, Economics, and Politics. She wrote her Philosophy honors thesis on practical applications of Henry Sidgwick's utilitarianism. Outside of the classroom, Kiera is the President of Phi Sigma Tau Philosophy Honors Society, a member of Pi Beta Phi Fraternity for Women, and served as the President of Washington and Lee's Moot Court team.

Rachael Miller '18 is a senior Philosophy and Japanese double major from Corning, New York. In her four years of Washington and Lee, she has been an active participant of the Mudd Center, and has served as an editor on the Mudd Journal of Ethics twice. She intends to pursue a Doctorate of Philosophy following a brief break from her studies — although her philosophical specialty is more inclined toward metaphysics and epistemology.

Kassie Scott '18 is a senior from Pennsville, New Jersey. She has majors in English and Sociology with a minor in Poverty and Human Capability Studies. She is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Omicron Delta Kappa, and Alpha Kappa Delta. In addition to studying abroad in London as a US-UK Fulbright Summer Institute recipient, Kassie has also worked abroad in Romania. She first served as a human rights intern to a nongovernmental organization and later conducted ethnographic research on housing rights. After graduation, Kassie hopes to pursue a Ph.D. in Social Policy.

Sesha Carrier '19 is a junior Philosophy major and Film and Visual Studies minor from Oregon. This was her first year volunteering her services as an editor for the Mudd Journal of Ethics, but she has plenty of experience curating academic journals as the editor-in-chief of The Stone, Washington and Lee's interdisciplinary academic journal. Bearing a strong passion for healing and caregiving, she intends to pursue a Master's Degree in Psychotherapy pending her graduation from Washington and Lee.

Stanton Lawes Geyer '20 is a sophomore at Washington and Lee University majoring in Global Politics and minoring in both Philosophy and Middle East & South Asian Studies with an Arabic concentration. In high school Stanton participated in and helped lead his choir and cross country teams. Stanton has continued pursuing extracurricular interests through the Mudd Journal, Amnesty International at W&L, and the Association for Middle East Interests. He hopes to explore questions in critical theory and sociology before and after graduating in 2020.

Parker Robertson '20 is a sophomore from Bend, OR. In high school, he led a staff of 80 students as Editor-in-Chief of the school newspaper. At Washington and Lee, he is involved in the Williams Investment Society and the Real Estate Society. He is also the

managing editor of the Stone, an interdisciplinary academic journal published annually. Additionally, Parker is a peer counselor, a member of Amnesty International, and a member of Kathekon. He plans to graduate with a double major in Business Administration and German with a minor in Philosophy.

Sierra Terrana '20 is a sophomore from Tampa, Florida. She is majoring in English and minoring in Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies with an Arabic language emphasis. Sierra will spend this summer studying Arabic language and culture in Amman, Jordan, and the upcoming fall semester in Beirut, Lebanon at the American University of Beirut. After graduating, she hopes to attend law school and pursue a career in international relations.

About the Roger Mudd Center for Ethics

The Roger Mudd Center of Ethics was established in 2010 through a gift to the University from award-winning journalist Roger Mudd. When he made his gift, Mudd said, "Given the state of ethics in our current culture, this seems a fitting time to endow a center for the study of ethics, and my university is its fitting home."

Today, the Mudd Center furthers that study of ethics by organizing rigorous, interdisciplinary programming. In addition to welcoming distinguished lecturers throughout the year to speak on ethical issues, the Mudd Center also sponsors and organizes ethics-based conferences, professional ethics institutes, and other public events that further discussion and thought about ethics among students, faculty, and staff at Washington and Lee University and beyond.

About Roger Mudd

Roger Mudd graduated from Washington and Lee University with a degree in History in 1950. Mudd's distinguished career in television journalism includes positions at CBS, NBC, PBS, and the History Channel. He has won five Emmy Awards, two George Foster Peabody Awards, and the Joan S. Barone Award for Distinguished Washington Reporting. Mudd serves on the board of the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges (VFIC) and helped establish the VFIC Ethics Bowl, an annual competition in which teams from Virginia's private colleges and universities debate ethical issues. He is also a member of the advisory committee for Washington and Lee's department of Journalism and Mass Communications and an honored benefactor of Washington and Lee.

Letter from the Editor

On March 10, 2018, three undergraduate students traveled to Washington and Lee University to deliver papers on a wide variety of ethical issues, ranging from what our attitudes should be toward death to whether people are morally obligated to protect their epigenetics to ensure a healthy genome for their children.

By all accounts, the third annual Mudd Undergraduate Conference in Ethics was a tremendous success. The papers presented and the ethical ideas contained within these papers were of excellent academic quality. Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, the discussion generated from each paper was insightful and thought provoking, impacting both the speakers and the audience members in attendance. I firmly believe that philosophy is not a field of study meant for solitary engagement, but rather a field whose potential is only fully realized when individuals thoughtfully connect with one another. As such, it is accurate to say that at this conference, robust philosophizing occurred.

The third annual publication of The Mudd Journal represents our attempt to bring this act of philosophizing to our readers and allow for the continuation of these important discussions among our readers. While covering a wide-array of topics, these papers all seek to do the same thing: make the reader pause, think, and reflect. Essays on multiculturalism, non-dual awareness, and immortality call us to reflect and think critically about both the way in which we view the world and our existence in the world. Essays on the moral duty of schools and journalistic objectivity force us to question our current institutions and consider what we demand of these societal systems. Finally, essays on epigenetics and neo-Machiavellian consequentialism make us reflect on what we consider an ethical life and moral acts to be. We are eager to publish all of these excellent works in our journal.

The Mudd Journal of Ethics is a product of extraordinary effort on behalf of numerous individuals whom I would be remiss not to thank. Debra Frein of the Mudd Center helped make our conference possible and has been just as valuable to the publication of this journal. Mary Woodson and Denise Watts of the Publications office at Washington and Lee have both been essential in our effort to create an attractive journal that we are proud to publish. As well, I am incredibly thankful for the editors of the journal who read each of the paper submissions, provided thoughtful feedback, and proposed useful edits and alterations. I want to thank each of them: Rachael Miller, Kassie Scott, Kiera Judge, Sesha Carrier, Parker Robertson, Sierra Terrana, and Stanton Geyer. Without them, and without all of the previously mentioned individuals, this journal would not have been possible.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Angela Smith, Director of the Mudd Center for Ethics, who really made the third volume of this journal possible. Her unending support, guiding hand, and enthusiastic commitment made both the hosting of the conference and publishing of this journal possible. I am incredibly thankful for Dr. Smith's guidance and profound wisdom.

I hope that the reader will enjoy this excellent collection of ethics-based scholarship from undergraduate philosophers across the country. Take your time as you read; pause, think, and reflect. Each paper's ideas are important, and we are honored to present them here, in this third volume of The Mudd Journal.

Sincerely,

Alex Farley '19

Editor-in-Chief

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Death, Dying, and Neglected Gardens: Exploring the Ethical Consequences of Immortality

Gael Bemis, Smith College

Abstract: As transhumanist philosophy begins to integrate new technologies of biological enhancement, life extension, and anti-ageing therapies, the quest for immortality has become increasingly relevant. Through a discussion of the value assignments socially given to life and death, and the implications these values have for core principles of bioethics, I seek to expose the ethical weakness in advocating for immortal therapies. I draw primarily on John Hardwig's controversial proposal of a "duty to die," and mortality ethics as presented by the members of the 2003 President's Council on Bioethics, in my critique of immortal advocacy. I consider bioethicist John Harris's argument for promoting immortal therapies, and propose that a justification for immortality as he presents it is rooted in socially established fearful and isolationist narrative. In response, I call for dissociating from such a narrative that devalues mortality, and assert that life and death cannot be ethically polarized. Additionally, I argue that it is immoral to advocate for immortal therapies, as doing so chafes against all established bioethical principles.

"The meaning of life is that it stops."
Franz Kafka

Among the most taught French literary works is Voltaire's 1759 work *Candide*: or, *Optimism*, a satirical novella known for both its obscenity and its powerful philosophical ideas. Having been raised in a joyful utopia, main character Candide knows the pleasures of life in his own Eden. After an adult life experiencing human misery of the worst kind, Candide abandons true optimism, but wrestles with his continued love of life—he asks of humankind why it endures such pain. Is anything more stupid, he wonders, than "to hold existence in horror, and yet to cling to it?"[1] Candide is not alone in his confusion; this question, likely as old as human suffering itself, is a central struggle of medicine. To practice medicine is to become substantially invested in the lives and well-being of other humans; medicine calls for healing of the horrors of existing, asks us to locate pain and assuage it. To practice bioethics, however, is to ask why, and with what purpose, healing occurs. The bioethicist is called to determine whether, and to what end, human manipulation or intervention should exist. In the face of an ever-advancing conversation of immortality, this is a task that necessitates an examination of the fantasy that drives such dialogue. Every fantasy or ideal is rooted in a narrative, providing reasoning for what is desired. This reasoning is ethically important to dissect and name, because right action is seated within the context of right thought and right desires. The social narrative surrounding death has provided reasoning for both advocating and defending a quest for immortality. In acknowledging and separating from this narrative, it is possible to see what it consists of, and what underlies the reasoning. From an analysis of the struggle with

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[1] Voltaire, Candide, trans. Shane Weller (New York: Dover, 1993).

finitude, we can begin not only to answer Candide's insistent question, but understand why he asks it.

The intent of this essay is not to seek an understanding of death itself, but the social cloth in which it is dressed. Death is not purely scientific or factual; it exists within a built social context, which by nature can change and vary. To understand this context and the ways in which it informs bioethics, this essay proceeds in three parts beginning with (1) brief consideration of value assumptions placed on life versus death, followed by (2) an account of the ways in which pursuing immortality is dissonant with the five core principles of bioethics, concluding with (3) comment on what pursuing therapeutic treatment of mortality itself exposes about medicine. The primary argument for life-extending therapies will be addressed as presented in John Harris's 2004 publication "Immortal Ethics," a wide defense of his large body of work advocating for life extension and immortality. To illuminate issues in Harris's argument, I will also reference John Hardwig's argument of a duty to die in his 2007 publication "Dying at the Right Time: Reflections on (Un)Assisted Suicide," and the exploration of life and death as presented in the 2003 report of the President's Council on Bioethics, *Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness,* especially within chapter four, "Ageless Bodies." Moving beyond a *reductio ad absurdum*[2] of immortality, I aim to construct an approach that exposes what is unethical about pursuing immortality in the first place.

The ethical starting point for an advocate of immortality is that death is bad, and life is good. There are many theoretical justifications for concluding that death is bad, with deprivationism as the standard view.[3] Deprivationism establishes that death is an evil because a loss is incurred: We are deprived of future pleasures and experiences by the finitude of death. Arguments that address the badness of death in other ways, such as in its processes or the circumstances of its occurrence, have certainly been made.[4] However, immortality as a response to the badness of death most directly responds to implications of life's finitude. If life is good in that it includes pleasurable or desirable experiences, the conclusion of those who would advocate for immortality is clear: More of a good thing is better. Yet, as any indulgent child knows, the second chocolate bar has different value than the fifth, or the 15th. Much like the experience of eating chocolate, the chronological and cumulative experience of living cannot be categorized into distinct units of standard pleasure or goodness.[5] From the knowledge that an experience is good, it does not follow that more will be just as good, or even be good at all. Even from the knowledge that death may cause pain or unpleasantness, it does not follow that death itself is an evil. Neither life nor death lend themselves to the experience of being ethically inflexible and polarized.

With the understanding of life and death as ethically relative, it is possible to see that their relativity is also social. The ethical value of a death, or life, of one person is defined

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[2] Specifically, in reference to Harris's implication that such an argument is insufficient, p. 527 of John Harris, "Immortal Ethics," Ethics and Health Policy Ethics, Health Policy and (Anti-) Aging: Mixed Blessings, 2012.

[3] Carl Tollef Solberg and Espen Gamlund, "The badness of death and priorities in health," BMC Medical Ethics 17, no. 1 (2016).

[4] Ibid

[5] "Ageless Bodies," The President's Council on Bioethics, "Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness," PsycEXTRA Dataset, October 2003.

not just by that person but by their community. As Hardwig observes, the dialogue of death often rests on a false assumption that death is something that comes "only to those who are all alone."[6] A death is made up of many parts beyond the individual, including the grief or relief of others, which is often a function of the death's timing. It is possible, suggests Hardwig, for a death to come too late—an unpopular thought, uncomfortable for many.[7] Those who would be better off dead are not necessarily people in pain, experiencing illness, or lacking something that medicine can provide. Those who would be better off dead, Hardwig argues further, may not even want to die. Emphasis on an individual's desires to the exclusion of their social dependence ignores the fact that we may be required, out of duty or obligation, to do something we may not want to do but would benefit others. It is Hardwig's view that sometimes, this task may be death. Advocating for immortality is in many ways composed from an isolationist delusion, where one individual's desire for life and perception of the goodness of their existence is weighted to the exclusion of any social consequences.

The bioethical principles of beneficence and nonmaleficence illustrate how the socially ignorant basis of immortality is not only nearsighted, but in direct opposition to bioethical standards of right action. Beneficence as the active promotion of good and well-being for others, and nonmaleficence as the active avoidance of harming others, both outline loose standards of behavior for individuals.[8] Together they request that an individual know what is good or harmful for others, and that they use that knowledge to inform their actions. While it may be difficult to think that one's death could be substantially beneficial to others, or that one's life could be substantially harmful to others, this is a reality of human beings' social existence. In what situations would the mortality of an individual be substantially beneficial to others? Hardwig's duty to die is discussed in the context of physician-assisted suicide, disease, senescence[9], and burdened loved ones. However, it is not only the obligations of diminished health that can constitute social value of one's death. Human mortality, the authors of *Beyond Therapy* acknowledge, accounts for certain social goods: It allows for the exercise of reproduction, enables reallocation of scarce resources, establishes the value of time to come and time spent, and prevents cultural stagnation. Generational shifts enable an understanding of life's forward movement, in a way that clocks or calendars cannot. "Cultural time is not chronological time"[10] — and the division between cultural hours may very well be the deaths and births that allow for turnover of ideas, memories, perceptions, and experiences. To promote good for and avoid harming others, it is necessary to acknowledge the net good done to others in the event of one's death, and the relative harm done in its absence. To advocate for immortality, as a bioethicist, is dismissive of these social obligations.

Considering the social goods brought about by mortality, immortality raises concerns

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[6] John Hardwig, "Is There a Duty to Die?" The Hastings Center Report 27, no. 2 (March 4, 1997).

[7] Ibid

[8] Definition of bioethical principles as used can be found on p 10, Vaughn, Lewis. Bioethics: principles, issues, and cases. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

[9] Used here in the biological definition: age-related physical deterioration of life forms

[10] "Ageless Bodies," The President's Council on Bioethics, "Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness," PsycEXTRA Dataset, October 2003.

of utility and aggregate welfare. Resources are scarce, and the social structure established by mortality accounts for some of life's goodness. If every individual, or even just most, were to be immortal, the fabric of the world we live in would change drastically enough that immortality would no longer look like what it was imagined to be by those who chose it. These concerns lead the authors of *Beyond Therapy* to conclude that drastically extended lifespan or immortality may be a sort of cultural "tragedy of the commons"[11]—while it may be an exciting prospect for an individual to have a leg up on the amount of time they are able to spend learning, experiencing, and synthesizing the world, such a reality is only a gift when it is relatively unique. In response to these concerns of utility and justice within immortal therapies, Harris is not troubled. Resting on the assumption that cost, risk, and other access barriers will prevent most people from attaining status as immortals, he envisions a world where mortals and immortals live in harmony.[12] Harris acknowledges that access to immortalizing therapies will likely exacerbate pre-existing inequities; however, this does not create for him any obligation to reconsider pursuing immortality. Regrettable as it is, immortality would be a palpable good just like any other services of health care, for which it would be ethically impermissible to deny access to some in lieu of the ability to provide access to all.[13] Harris both expects and accepts a lack of distributive justice, relying on access barriers to contain the population of immortals. It is one thing to acknowledge individual limits in the enacting justice, such that the pursuit of equality for others does not constitute undue burden or require supererogatory action. It is another thing entirely to rely on and passively accept injustice to avoid addressing concerns of utility.

Where justice, selflessness, and utility have opposed the ethical basis of a quest for immortality, it might be expected that autonomy would be a more forgiving bioethical principle. Surely what is a bit selfish, unjust, or impractical about idealizing immortality may take shelter in the right to self-determination granted by the autonomy principle. Yet, this is not the case. "Ageless Bodies" contemplates not only the social consequences of postponing or eliminating death, but the individual consequences as well. It addresses birth and death through their contrast dependency, tracing the arc of the human life as something both created and destroyed.[14] Dreams and the urgency with which they are pursed are suggested as dependent on the inevitability of death. Pressures for euthanasia and suicide, especially in the event of chronic illness whilst immortal, are raised as concerns for the individual's ability to direct their own life.[15] Freedom to procreate, and respect for one's ability to derive meaning and purpose from procreation, are also central to respect of autonomy. What becomes of these ways in which death seems to bless life, and give it clarity? For Harris, nothing. Death continues to be merely an obstacle, a disability, for which any goodness it provides the individual would be greatly outweighed by its elim-

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[11] Hardin, Garrett. "The Tragedy of the Commons." *Science*162, no. 3859 (December 13, 1968): 1243-248.

[12] John Harris, "Immortal Ethics," Ethics and Health Policy Ethics, Health Policy and (Anti-) Aging: Mixed Blessings, 2012.

[13] Ibid, 529

[14] "Ageless Bodies," The President's Council on Bioethics, "Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness," PsycEXTRA Dataset, October 2003.

[15] Ibid

ination.[16] There is a paternalistic quality to such ignorance—to assume there is nothing central about life, for anyone, which depends on death for its significance, so they will be better off without it. Much like a physician is expected not to decide a course of action for their patients based on what they themselves fear, bioethicists should not construct ethical arguments that assume their anxieties are ubiquitous. It is ethically concerning to impart blindness on all because of what one cannot see for themselves.

Throughout "Ageless Bodies" is a sober tone of caution underlying pervasive optimism. Addressing age within the sphere of medicine brings with it implications that could have undesirable consequences. What does it mean to consider what would otherwise be a whole, healthy, ideal human life as a problem to be solved simply because the life was finite?[17] The members of the Bioethical Council warn that immortality will not absolve humans of the need to wrestle with purpose, meaning, or time. It is a given of Harris's argument for ethical permissibility of immortality that all people desire life, at any cost, and fear death. What does it mean, for the purpose of medicine, that people would desire life at any cost? Is this pervasive fear of life's end justified? Must the principles of bioethics be sacrificed in the face of fear, of lacking control? In the introduction of their topic choice—biotechnology and enhancement therapies—the authors of *Beyond Therapy* discuss René Descartes' visions for a medicine of the future: one where man would be "like masters and owners of nature."[18] It is from this vision of medicine—one which owns life and seeks to master it—that the weakness of a narrative that devalues mortality is illuminated.

The quest for immortality does more than chafe against every tenet of bioethics; it provides opportunity to flex one's logic muscles in untangling the convoluted assumptions devaluing mortality. Such a pursuit ignores that nothing about this world is immortal—nothing that humans depend on—not the earth, not space, not time, no element of this existence as we know it. Advocates of immortality seek to control what is outside the scope of human influence, scrambling madly in the face of the unknown, cowering in fear and avoidance rather than seeking acceptance. The quest for immortality in itself reveals a weakness in humanity that is problematic in what it implies. The badness of death as a starting place for bioethics and for medicine limits the practice of healing and the ability to sufficiently alleviate suffering. It is not weak to accept that humankind may have physical limits or that life ends. What is weak is to fear this observation, and clamp down on life with a grip so tight it strangles anything delicate. It is "better surely," muses Harris in the concluding statements of "Immortal Ethics," to match the "scientific race to achieve immortality" with a parallel race in ethics to keep apace.[19] Ethics, however, moves not with velocity fueled by fear, but with careful purpose and thorough inquiry. It is not the task of ethics to justify social fears and weaknesses on the descriptive plane, but to transcend these, deducing and challenging their normative roots.

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[16] John Harris, "Immortal Ethics," Ethics and Health Policy Ethics, Health Policy and (Anti-) Aging: Mixed Blessings, 2012: 531

[17] "Ageless Bodies," The President's Council on Bioethics, "Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness," PsycEXTRA Dataset, October 2003.

[18] "Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness," The President's Council on Bioethics, "Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness," PsycEXTRA Dataset, October 2003.

[19] John Harris, "Immortal Ethics," Ethics and Health Policy Ethics, Health Policy and (Anti-) Aging: Mixed Blessings, 2012: 533

Voltaire concludes his novella with a return to the land: We meet Candide in Eden, and we leave him in a field of crops. He tends to his plot *ut operaretur eum;* driven with purpose, no longer fearing the world which he knows now to be full of pain. On occasion, we're told, Candide's mentor would remind him of the pain he endured in his lifetime and rationalize the experiences. "That is very well put," Candide would patiently reply, "but we must go and work our garden."[20] And so they would. As in all gardens—whether they be of crops, flowers, or of the fruits and labors of our own lives—there are seasons, the death of one necessary for the birth of the next. As in all gardens, the tenderness with which one nurtures the bloom of spring earns its sweetness from the understanding that it will expire.

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[20] Voltaire, Candide, trans. Shane Weller (New York: Dover, 1993).

Taking Pythagoras to Dinner, or, The Ethics of Journalistic Objectivity

Chris Larson, University of Central Florida

Abstract: In this paper, I argue that journalistic objectivity is an unethical epistemic approach to the realities that journalists report. Working from Carolyn Kitch's definition of objectivity and Edmund Lambeth's approach to journalism ethics, I argue that objectivity dehumanizes the deeply human objects that journalists seek to know and report, and is thus unethical. I then outline a potential alternative where the journalist seeks to create empathy in the reader for the life-experiences of other groups.

Examining the *telos,* or history, and practical function of major American institutions is not one of Twitter's strengths. Yet in the wake of an election season where the Press Secretary started his tenure debating the size of inauguration crowds and the media strung along a near-conspiracy regarding Kremlin collusion with the President of the United States, even simple social media sites like Twitter have taken up philosophical discussions of journalism ethics. One of the recurring questions within these discussions is this: is journalistic objectivity ethically desirable? In this paper, I examine this question and argue that journalistic objectivity is not ethically desirable. To prove this position, I will define journalistic objectivity, determine journalism's *telos,* and then examine whether objectivity moves journalism toward its *telos.*[1]

Defining objectivity is a tricky task. Journalistic objectivity only came into vogue in the early twentieth century, and curiously arose as a tool to stand up for the socio-economically disadvantaged.[2] What, then, does journalistic objectivity involve? Carolyn Kitch defines the typical conception of journalistic objectivity as "unbiased, neutral, impartial, detached, balanced and invisible."[3] Obviously not all of these qualities are wrong, but, as Hackett and Zhao point out, detachment is the key idea.

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[1] For a defense of this ethical approach, please see Edmund B. Lambeth, "Waiting for a New St. Benedict: Alasdair MacIntyre & the Theory and Practice of Journalism," *Business & Professional Ethics Journal* 9, no. 1/2 (1990): 97-108.

[2] "Denouncing the partisan orientations of the established newspapers, the labour press proclaimed its own non-partisan, non-sectarian character…the labour press thus distinguished itself from the partisan and sectarian papers of religious, ethnic, and political factions by its adoption of the democratic discourse of the Enlightenment and its universalizing language. *This universalizing perspective can be seen as a precursor, indeed, an early version, of objectivity in journalism.* In their critique of the established press, labour journalists held up the ideal of *disinterested* – in other words, *objective* – knowledge as the only solid foundation for social reform." See Robert A. Hackett and Yuezhi Zhao, *Sustaining Democracy? Journalism and the Politics of Objectivity,* (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1998), 23.

[3] Carolyn Kitch, "Rethinking Objectivity in Journalism and History," *American Journalism* 16, no. 2 (1999): 114.

> "…In [this flawed] view, journalism's ethical obligation is to reflect the real world, with accuracy, fairness, and balance. Journalists can separate facts from opinion or value judgments. Journalists, as detached observers, can stand apart from the real-world events and transfer the truth or meaning of those events to the news audience by employing neutral language and professionally competent reporting techniques, such as the standardized story format. Truth or knowledge depends upon the observer's (journalist's) neutrality in relation to the object of study. The news medium, when 'properly used,' is neutral and value-free and can thus guarantee the truthfulness of the message. The news can therefore potentially transmit an unbiased, transparent, neutral translation of external reality."[4]

In this view, semi-scientific detachment is the approach and unfiltered transmittance of external reality is the goal. Objectivity is not just another way of saying accuracy or truthfulness–if it was, I would have no concerns with it. Objectivity is rather an epistemic method, an approach to reality that takes as its model some sort of impartial scientific observer, recording data as it comes in, without interpretation or comment.

With objectivity defined, we can now determine the *telos* of journalism, a task that, unfortunately, is much harder. To simplify, we can begin with Christopher Tollefsen who outlines the standard vision of journalism's *telos*. For him, journalism is supposed to support "the autonomous participation of citizens in deliberation about the common good."[5] Yet even this may be too broad because it fails to account for journalism's rather unique approach to supporting this deliberation.[6] Journalism supports this deliberation not primarily by providing a forum for the exchange of viewpoints (like Facebook) or a way to communicate with elected officials (like the ACLU) but by supplying news and opinions. This uniqueness must be incorporated in an understanding of journalism's *telos.*

Sandra L. Borden, recognizing these difficulties, proposes a different approach: "Journalism's immediate goal is to create a special type of knowledge necessary for community members to flourish; journalists produce and disseminate this knowledge in the form of 'news.' The ultimate goal, or *telos* is to help citizens know well in the public sphere."[7] This *telos* takes into account the unique methods and products of journalism, as well as the current form of the profession. Of course, it raises an obvious question: what does it mean to "know well"? While a full-blown epistemology is impossible here, a short explanation may help.

Knowing well presupposes that the process of knowing is not ethically neutral. The realm of relationships best illuminates this. Knowing a person cannot and ought not be approached the way one might approach knowing quantum physics. If I were to begin

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[4] Hackett and Zhao, *Sustaining Democracy? Journalism and the Politics of Objectivity,* 111.

[5] Christopher Tolleffsen, "Journalism and the Social Good," *Public Affairs Quarterly* 14, no. 4 (2000): 296.

[6] To be precise, the press provides a simplified and interpreted digest of what they deem to be relevant events in the world. Even this raises questions about the possibility of objectivity.

[7] Sandra L. Borden, *Journalism as Practice: MacIntyre, Virtue Ethics and the Press,* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 50.

filling out binders, reports, papers, and tables with all the information I have about my girlfriend, it would be strange. If I then tried to run experiments by placing her in different situations or making certain comments just to generate her reaction (and therefore more data) that would be immoral. To approach her as an object, capable of being deconstructed into various facts, is not only epistemically ineffective but also inherently dehumanizing. Conversely, if I were to study the Pythagorean theorem by trying to have a conversation about its childhood, I would be violating the nature of the thing itself. Knowing is not graded pass/fail, as if each object is either known or not known, full stop.[8] Knowing admits of degrees and proper epistemic approaches. The fact that these two examples represent two different kinds of knowledge is precisely the point. Because there are different kinds of knowledge, one must take the proper epistemic approach. Taking the wrong approach is not only ineffective but dehumanizing (treating my girlfriend like a scientific object, for example). Thus, an ethical epistemic approach is necessary. To use the wrong epistemic approach is unethical (again, see the examples in this paragraph).

At this point it seems we have traveled far from journalistic objectivity but we have actually established the key premises that will give us our conclusion. To recap: we are examining the ethics of journalistic objectivity in contrast to journalistic embeddedness and subjectivity. Thus, we first defined objectivity as primarily neutral, semi-scientific detachment. Then, we determined that journalism's *telos* is to help the public know well which includes, in part, using an ethical epistemic approach. Now we must determine whether journalistic objectivity is an ethical epistemic method for the things journalists write about.

What objects do journalists seek to know and report? Journalists report on complex events that are an irreducible confluence of social, scientific, and historical factors. Any given newsworthy situation is impossible to fully parse because it is deeply human. There is a "cognitive opacity"[9] to these situations whereby our best explanations are but heuristics of a reality that one must experience to understand. This last point is crucial. These situations are complex not primarily because they involve lots of facts (the way special relativity does) but because they are deeply human. To recall our two examples above, journalists write about things much more like my girlfriend than like the Pythagorean theorem. They write about subjects that involve, affect, are interpreted, shaped, moved, defined, and presented by humans. Think of foreign policy as an obvious example. Foreign policy decisions are presented by government agencies, interpreted by generals, implemented by soldiers, and harm or help combatants. Journalists rely on front-line reports, statements, anonymous leaks, and third-party analysis to write stories about these decisions. Certainly journalists can (and should) fact-check, but how does a journalist fact-check? Almost always by relying on another person to interpret or confirm an interpretation of the situation. There are no discreet propositions floating around in external reality waiting for journalists to grab and condense them into a story. There are, instead, deeply human, personal interactions built on relationships of trust, suspicion, and authority.

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[8] The fact that knowing is not an all-or-nothing endeavor is key to this argument. One might say that I actually can know something about my girlfriend by filling out tables about her, but at the very least such an approach would render deeply misconstrued and incomplete knowledge. I am skeptical that it would render any real knowledge at all.

[9] Stephen J. A. Ward, *The Invention of Journalism Ethics: The Path to Objectivity and Beyond,* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2004), 273.

Journalism's source is these relationships and interactions. One does not know Near Eastern foreign policy the way one knows the Pythagorean theorem. One knows Near Eastern foreign policy in a way far similar to the way one knows another person. One relies on the experiences of another person and their own experiences to know foreign policy, just like they do when trying to know another person. This is crucial–the key to knowing well in these cases is experiencing the situation being reported.

Given that these are the subjects journalists report on, is objectivity an ethical epistemic method? I believe it is not. Objectivity fails to recognize the inherent humanity and complexity of these situations. It does this by supposing that one can simply look into these situations, determine the relevant facts, causes, and contexts, and record this in a detached way. But how does one record the relative trustworthiness of a source? Is Sarah Huckabee Sanders trustworthy on healthcare policy? Ask a room full of journalists that and you will get a deeply divided group. How does a journalist in a detached and neutral way reach out to her inside source? How does a front-line journalist determine, in a detached way, whether the child maimed in the drone strike is a relevant part of the story? Objectivity is a mismatched and unethical epistemic method that treats deeply human situations in a dehumanizing, semi-scientific way.

What about truth? What about knowledge? Are these impossible? Far from it. In fact, my argument here stems from a deep commitment to truth, but not truth conceived in a pseudo-Enlightenment fashion, as a series of discreet propositions waiting to be detachedly recorded. Some truths are like that, but as I argued above, not the truths journalists seek to help the public know. Jim Willis summarizes my argument well:

> "in the strictest sense of the term…objectivity is an extreme that can never be realized in the telling of a story unless the object–and not the reporter–tells it itself. And if the object is a human, then the same subjectivity enters in."[10]

My argument is that journalists seek to tell stories about humans or deeply human phenomena. Thus, just like scientific detachment is the wrong epistemic approach to knowing my girlfriend, it is an unethical epistemic approach here. I am, in a sense, biting the bullet this question presents. Much of the discussion surrounding journalistic objectivity assumes the dangers of journalistic subjectivity and embeddedness. And, certainly, these methods have not been perfected and will not be. But the dangers of journalistic objectivity are far greater, for the danger is dehumanization–treating human subjects in a scientifically detached way. Objectivity is not an ethically desirable journalistic method. Avoiding objectivity and embracing subjectivity does not jettison truth or abandon the quest for reality. Rosalind Coward actually argues the opposite, and uses the example of wartime journalism: "What actually conveys the true horror [of war] is not impartial description but how it affects the person who observes it. Arguably, this is a more truthful account than a record of events delivered by a detached individual."[11] What she writes

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[10] Jim Willis, *The Human Journalist: Reporters, Perspectives, and Emotions,* (Westport: Praeger, 2003), 45-46.

[11] Rosalind Coward, *Speaking Personally: The Rise of Subjective and Confessional Journalism,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 31.

about wartime journalism I would extend to journalism generally. It is possible that journalistic objectivity may, unwittingly, render a less truthful account of reality than a competing subjective report.

What is the alternative to journalistic objectivity? In short, it is a form of subjective–perhaps even Gonzo–journalism. While more work needs to be done here, the answer has already been suggested. The journalist should seek to help us understand groups and individuals whose lives we do not lead. The journalist should put us in the shoes of another community or another person. They should lead us outside of ourselves and the narrow confines of our experience to recognize other dimensions and to empathize with those experiencing reality in a different way. Tom Hallman Jr., a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist, typified this approach:

> "There are certain core elements about the way we live and the way we are as humans that I try to get at, too, in my stories, and that's about how you live and how you feel and how you move through the world… it's not necessarily the factual kind of truth as much as the emotional truth."[12]

Pursuing objectivity in journalism is well-intentioned, but it ultimately misses the point. Just as I could be motivated by genuine care yet dehumanize my girlfriend by my epistemic approach, I can honestly want to help society yet harm it by seeking objectivity. To reject journalistic objectivity is not to reject truthfulness as a virtue, or commit oneself to a radical philosophical skepticism. It is merely to recognize that reality is far more deeply human, complex, and intricate than we could ever understand with scientific detachment. It is to act in accordance with the real difference between scientific facts and newsworthy situations. It is to realize our responsibility to know well, to engage with reality in an ethical epistemic way, and to pursue the truth even when that truth seems irrelevant or unimportant. It is an invitation to know my girlfriend in a different way than I know the Pythagorean theorem. It is an invitation to use proper epistemic methods that recognize the often-messy human realities of newsworthy situations. Or, to put it with some snark, it is an invitation to take your girlfriend to dinner and leave Pythagoras at home.

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[12] David Craig, *The Ethics of the Story: Using Narrative Techniques Responsibly in Jounalism,* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 36.

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Preventing Obesity in the Next Generation Today: An Epigenetic Approach

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Abstract: Researchers previously believed that genes were the primary source of inheritance of traits. However, new research has shown that many traits have low heritability. Specifically, obesity, a disorder affecting nearly a third of the global population, has little genetic heritability. Furthermore, researchers now believe that epigenetics (heritable changes in gene expression that do not involve changing the DNA sequence) is the missing link between the inheritance of obesity and our environmental stimuli. Research has shown that obese prenatal conditions and poor dietary choices are strongly correlated with differentiated epigenetic markers that, when inherited, can increase the child's chances of developing obesity later in life and lowering their well-being. Furthermore, potential parents ought to conserve a healthy epigenome by pursuing a healthy BMI so that their children are not restricted by their parents' lifestyles. This normative claim is justified using intergenerational equity principles, which suggests that the current generation must conserve the environment, specifically the epigenetic environment, so that the decisions previous generations make do not hinder future generations. Finally, preliminary research has shown that potential parents can practically conserve a healthy epigenome for the next generation by adopting a variety of behaviors.

Obesity is a heritable pandemic that affects around 650 million people worldwide.[1] It can augment the risk of other life-threatening diseases, lower life expectancy, and reduce quality of life. New research has been published to suggest that parents' lifestyle choices can be linked to the likelihood that their children will develop obesity later in life through epigenetic inheritance. Thus, there seems to be a moral responsibility on potential parents to lower their offspring's risk of developing obesity. In this paper, I argue that potential parents ought to pursue a lifestyle that conserves a healthy epigenome so that the next generation is not hindered by the behaviors of the previous generation. My strategy is as follows: first, I discuss how obesity has a low heritability and how epigenetics has been cast as the missing link to inheritance of obesity. Second, I explore research indicating that pre-natal conditions and parental diets alter epigenetic markers that can be inherited by offspring. Furthermore, these epigenetic markers have been significantly associated with higher birthweight and increased risk of obesity in the offspring's adulthood. Third, I justify my normative claim using intergenerational equity principles and criteria. Finally, I discuss practical applications of this claim and how recent experiments demonstrate that

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[1] "WHO | Obesity and Overweight." *WHO*. Last modified February, 2018, http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs311/en/.

these applications can reduce children's risk of developing obesity.[2]

To begin, research has shown that obesity has a low heritability. Heritability can be defined as the fraction of visible, phenotypic variation in a certain trait within a population due to genetic variation between individuals.[3] Therefore, traits with high heritability tend to show little phenotypic variation from genetic differences, and traits with low heritability tend to show large variation. Current literature suggests that approximately twenty percent of our BMI variation can be associated with genetic differences, leaving a large gap in the explanation of why certain individuals are at a larger risk of developing obesity than others.[4]

Recently, epigenetics has been described as the missing link between our environmental factors and the heritability of obesity. As a whole, epigenetics is a broad field of study that can be defined as "the structural adaptation of chromosomal regions so as to register, signal or perpetuate altered activity states".[5] Thus, epigenetics alters phenotypic properties by altering transcriptional and translational abilities of genes, not the genetic code itself. There are many epigenetic inheritance systems known to impact transcription and translation: self-sustaining loops, chromatin silencing, RNA interference (RNAi), and structural templating.[6] These mechanisms are extremely sensitive to environmental changes (i.e. lifestyle choices) and can be inherited by our offspring.

The most extensively studied epigenetic mechanism is DNA methylation, which falls under chromatin silencing.[7] Here, a methyl group is added to the CG dinucleotide (CpG site) of DNA.[8] When a gene is densely methylated, its propensity to be transcribed drops, effectively silences the gene and altering the phenotype of an individual. Recent research has shown that obese children possess significantly different methylation patterns to non-obese children. [9] While the causation between these methylation pattern differs and obesity has not yet been well established, the strong correlation can still be used as a biomarker to assess obesity risk in offspring. Due to this strong correlation, the remainder of this paper will draw from research on DNA methylation patterns to show associations between parental behaviors and the probability that their offspring will develop obesity.

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[2] An objection may be presented that some of the practical applications discussed may only be accessible by people of higher socioeconomic status. I will only be discussing the biology of these applications, and the in-depth concerns about socioeconomics and accessibility are not within the scope of this paper.

[3] Eva Jablonka, Marion J Lamb, and Anna Zeligowski, *Evolution in Four Dimensions: Genetic, Epigenetic, Behavioral, and Symbolic Variation in the History of Life*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2014), 357.

[4] Adam E. Locke et al., "Genetic Studies of Body Mass Index Yield New Insights for Obesity Biology," *Nature* 518, no. 7538 (February 12, 2015): 197–206, https://doi.org/10.1038/nature14177.

[5] Bird, Adrian. "Perceptions of Epigenetics." *Nature* 447 (May 23, 2007): 396-398. https://doi.org/10.1038/nature05913.

[6] Jablonka, Lamb, and Zeligowski, *Evolution in Four Dimensions: Genetic, Epigenetic, Behavioral, and Symbolic Variation in the History of Life*, 111-153.

[7] Jablonka, Lamb, and Zeligowski, 126.

[8] Kara Wegermann and Cynthia A. Moylan, "Epigenetics of Childhood Obesity," *Current Pediatrics Reports* 5, no. 3 (September 1, 2017): 111–17, https://doi.org/10.1007/s40124-017-0133-8.

[9] Xu Ding et al., "Genome-Wide Screen of DNA Methylation Identifies Novel Markers in Childhood Obesity," *Gene* 566, no. 1 (July 15, 2015): 74–83, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gene.2015.04.032.

The first major area of methylation inheritance associated with childhood obesity occurs in pre-natal conditions. There are already many known substances and behaviors mothers that must avoid, such as drinking, smoking, and stress, in order to ensure the healthy development of her child. Similarly, there are pre-natal conditions that can lead to the inheritance of methylated genes associated with increased risk of obesity. Certain activities that mothers partake in during pregnancy may methylate certain genes, and they can be passed down to the fetus through the umbilical cord. According to one study, "differential methylation of 23 genes in umbilical cord blood and placenta explained seventy to eighty percent of variation in birth weight, more than was explained by the corresponding gene expression profiles." [10] Consequently, high birth weights have also been linked to increased risk of obesity in adult life. [11] Again, while the causation of these methylation patterns has not been confirmed, this strong correlation can be used as a biomarker for the offspring developing obesity in adulthood.

Maternal obesity during pregnancy has been shown to affect methylation patterns. Methylation, as mentioned before, is extremely sensitive to its environment. Thus, maternal cells that have been exposed to an unhealthy environment due to an excess of surrounding adipose (fat) tissue may methylate certain genes to adjust to the metabolic change. These methylation patterns, if present during pregnancy, can be inherited by the developing fetus through cord blood. Recent research suggests that obese pre-natal environments have been linked with methylation changes in genes related to embryonic development, growth, and metabolic disease in the offspring.[12]

A specific example of obese pre-natal conditions affecting fetal growth can be seen when studying the Insulin Growth Factor 2 (IGF2) gene. IGF2 is an imprinted gene encoding for fetal growth factors. Thus, this gene is mostly active during fetal development. A recent study found significant IGF2 methylation reduction in cord blood in mothers with BMI's greater than 30, resulting in elevated IGF2 protein levels within the umbilical cord. Furthermore, these increased IGF2 protein concentrations were then associated with increased birth weight.[13] Based on this data, a clear link can be shown between maternal obesity during pregnancy and an overweight phenotype in offspring. This phenotype is created before any lifestyle choices are made by the child themselves.

The second major area of methylation inheritance can be derived from the germ line (cellular lineage that develop into sperm and egg cells) . Before, only maternal lifestyle choices were correlated with increased obesity risk in children, but now paternal lifestyle choices can also be linked to methylation changes. Because the father is not directly connected to his offspring during fetal development, the only way for his lifestyle choices to impact his offspring is through the epigenetic markers of his sperm. Methylation patterns are quite stable in somatic cells, but previous research has suggested that during sexual

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[10] Wegermann and Moylan. "Epigenetics of Childhood Obesity." 111–17.

[11] I. W. Johnsson et al., "A High Birth Weight Is Associated with Increased Risk of Type 2 Diabetes and Obesity," *Pediatric Obesity* 10, no. 2 (April 1, 2015): 77–83, https://doi.org/10.1111/ijpo.230.

[12] Susan J. van Dijk et al., "Recent Developments on the Role of Epigenetics in Obesity and Metabolic Disease," *Clinical Epigenetics* 7 (July 11, 2015): 66, https://doi.org/10.1186/s13148-015-0101-5..

[13] Cathrine Hoyo et al., "Association of Cord Blood Methylation Fractions at Imprinted Insulin-like Growth Factor 2 (IGF2), Plasma IGF2, and Birth Weight," *Cancer Causes & Control* 23, no. 4 (April 2012): 635–45, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10552-012-9932-y.

reproduction there is a reprogramming of these epigenetic markers.[14]

Several mammalian studies have been conducted to show that diet changes can impact methylation patterns in the germ line and can be inherited by offspring. Compared to human studies, where there are many lifestyle choices that could impact these epigenetic markers, animal studies provide a more controlled environment to detect epigenetic changes.[15] In one experiment, high-fat diets in female mice were shown to alter methylation patterns of metabolic genes in their oocytes and even their offspring's oocytes and liver cells.[16] Other experiments showed unique methylation of sperm in certain developmental genes when paternal mice were fed a low-protein diet. Furthermore, an approximate twenty percent difference in methylation patterns were found in liver cells of offspring from these mice with low-protein diets compared to a control diet, suggesting that these methylation patterns may have been inherited from the germ line.[17] These experiments show that a poor parental diet can create heritable and harmful consequences for the metabolic rates of their offspring.

Due to the heritability of diet induced methylation changes, these epigenetic markers can increase risk of obesity in offspring. In an experiment conducted by Peter Huypens and his team, mice were fed either a high-fat diet, low-fat diet, or standard mouse diet for six weeks. Gametes were then extracted from these groups and then in vitro fertilized (IVF), meaning they were manually combined to form a zygote in a laboratory dish. These zygotes were then placed into a healthy surrogate mother. The IVF was done to eliminate the possibility of pre-natal conditions of the obese mothers impacting the offspring's susceptibility of developing obesity. Adult offspring were then fed high-fat diets, and the researchers found that offspring from two obese parents (both on high-fat diets) were prone to gaining more weight; while offspring from two lean parents gained the least weight on the high-fat diet.[18] Based on the results of this experiment and of the previously discussed germ line studies, methylation inheritance and other epigenetic mechanism have been shown to directly impact the metabolic rate of offspring.

Up until now, I have explored epigenetic research explaining the prevalence of obesity today. Because of the severe consequences of this disease, there is a need to prevent future generations from dealing with these burdens. People with obesity are at a significantly higher risk for several other diseases including heart disease, Type two diabetes, gallbladder disease, some types of cancer, and even mental health disorders significantly increas-

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[14] Suhua Feng, Steven E. Jacobsen, and Wolf Reik, "Epigenetic Reprogramming in Plant and Animal Development," *Science* 330, no. 6004 (2010): 622–27.

[15] Van Dijk, "Recent Developments on the Role of Epigenetics in Obesity and Metabolic Disease." 66.

[16] Zhao-Jia Ge et al., "DNA Methylation in Oocytes and Liver of Female Mice and Their Offspring: Effects of High-Fat-Diet–Induced Obesity," *Environmental Health Perspectives* 122, no. 2 (February 2014): 159–64, https://doi.org/10.1289/ehp.1307047.

[17] Benjamin R. Carone et al., "Paternally-Induced Transgenerational Environmental Reprogramming of Metabolic Gene Expression in Mammals," *Cell* 143, no. 7 (December 23, 2010): 1084–96, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cell.2010.12.008.

[18] Peter Huypens et al., "Epigenetic Germline Inheritance of Diet-Induced Obesity and Insulin Resistance," *Nature Genetics* 48, no. 5 (May 2016): 497, https://doi.org/10.1038/ng.3527.

ing the chances of a lower quality of life.[19] While many may assume that obese individuals are fully responsible for their physical well-being, we have explored an overwhelming amount of research suggesting that one's susceptibility to developing obesity can be associated with parental lifestyle choices before their birth. Thus, a moral responsibility should be placed on parents to prevent their children from facing the consequences of obesity.

Parents ought to pursue a lifestyle that conserves a healthy epigenome for their children. This will be justified based on an intergenerational equity argument. Intergenerational equity deals with conflicting interests between the current generation and future generations. Typically, this philosophical approach pertains to environmental issues. For example, our current generation's desire to travel comfortably places a burden on future generations due to an increase in carbon dioxide emissions. In essence, intergenerational equity argues that, "each generation is considered a custodian of the planet for further generations".[20] Because intergenerational equity's focus on conflict between current generations and future ones, I will explore more deeply how its principles play a role in epigenetic inheritance.

To resolve these conflicting interests, intergenerational equity creates normative claims for the current, living generation to follow. Edith Brown Weiss, a leading theorist in intergenerational equity, claims that there are three normative principles for current generations. The first states that current generations ought to conserve natural and cultural resources for the next generation. This should be done so that future generations are not restricted to solving problems which arise from a lack of resources at their disposal due to previous generations' wastefulness. The second claim advocates that each generation should maintain the quality of the planet so that each new generation inherits the planet in no worse a condition than it was received. The third claim argues that the current generation ought to provide members of the next generation with equitable rights to legacy. These three normative principles are created based on four criteria: they must not restrict the current generation from using the necessary resources to meet their current needs; they must predict the desires and ambitions of future generations; they should be clear in their solutions to current problems, and they must be shared by different cultural traditions and accepted by different economic and political systems.[21] Overall, much of intergenerational equity's normative claims focus on the conservation of resources such that there is equity between generations to carry out their lives in ways that are sustainable yet not limiting.

The normative claims of intergenerational equity can be used to justify the current issue of epigenetic inheritance of increased risk of obesity by extension of the second claim. The claim deals with maintaining the quality of the planet for future generations, which includes the landscape and life. As the future generation will be part of the life on

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[19] "Health Risks of Being Overweight | NIDDK." National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/weight-management/health-risks-overweight.

[20] Mark A. Rothstein, Yu Cai, and Gary E. Marchant, "THE GHOST IN OUR GENES: LEGAL AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF EPIGENETICS," *Health Matrix* (Cleveland, Ohio : 1991) 19, no. 1 (2009): 1–62.

[21] Edith Brown Weiss, "In Fairness To Future Generations and Sustainable Development," American University International Law 8, no. 1 (1992): 19–26.

this planet, avoiding environmental harms that could impact their epigenome should be avoided. Mark Rothstein writes that "[i]f humankind has a responsibility to future generations to refrain from activities that cause environmental harms to the planet, including damaging current and future generations of wildlife, then it follows that the responsibility also extends to environmental harms that could damage the genomes and epigenomes of future generations of humans."[22] Thus, based on the research previously presented, parental diets and pre-natal conditions must be modified so that the epigenome is conserved for the following generation so that it does hinder their opportunities in life.

It is necessary to mention that the epigenome should be conserved, not improved, to avoid presenting a eugenic claim. Eugenics, known as the Original Sin of modern genetics, was first introduced by Sir Francis Galton. He declared that eugenics was a humane approach to improving humanity by selectively breeding mentally superior individuals with those of similar traits. He proposed this act with the main goal of increasing the genetically well-endowed and decreasing the genetically inferior.[23] These could easily be applied to epigenetics as well. If eugenic ideals were to be placed into this intergenerational conflict, parents should seek the healthiest diets and best pre-natal conditions to ensure the fittest methylation patterns for their children. This allows for the parents of children who are susceptible to congenital obesity to be easily discriminated against based on factors that are out of their control. Epigenetics markers can be altered and reversed to some extent, which we will explore later, but creating the healthiest possible generation will create a stigma against the parents who cannot foster these conditions during pregnancy. People would assume that those parents did not care about the well-being of their children instead of understanding that one of the parents may carry a genetic disorder related to carrying excess adipose tissue. Thus, parents should maintain a healthy, not superior, epigenome for their children.

In compliance with the criteria of principles of intergenerational equity, there should exist some practical application to this claim that parents should conserve a healthy epigenome for the next generation. Additionally, as stated before, this practical application should have the potential to exist in multiple cultural traditions under a variety of economic and political conditions. Much of the research presented focuses on how adipose tissue of parents impacts the methylation inheritance from both the womb and germ line. Thus, parents ought to pursue a healthy BMI (18.5-24.9) before and during the development of the child. There are many ways to fulfill this objective regardless of economic, cultural, or personal limitations/preferences. Some of these strategies include exercise, a low-calorie diet, or even bariatric surgery for those with the financial means to do so. Of course, the means of approaching a healthy BMI should be in a healthy manner and not done through starvation or other forms of disordered eating. Moreover, any dietary or exercise plan should be approved by a physician. Overall, this practical application of pursuing a healthy BMI can be obtained in a multitude of ways, ensuring that no restraints are placed on the current generation to fulfill this objective.

Also, new research shows that efforts to pursue a healthy BMI can alter methylation

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[22] Mark A. Rothstein, Yu Cai, and Gary E. Marchant, "THE GHOST IN OUR GENES: LEGAL AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF EPIGENETICS," Health Matrix (Cleveland, Ohio : 1991) 19, no. 1 (2009): 1–62.

[23] Dominique Aubert-Marson, "Sir Francis Galton: the father of eugenics," *Medicine Sciences* 25, no. 6–7 (July 2009): 641–45, https://doi.org/10.1051/medsci/2009256-7641.

patterns in somatic and germ line cells, positively influencing epigenetic inheritance for children. As methylation is highly sensitive to environmental changes, it is not unreasonable to believe that parents can adopt new, healthier lifestyle choices that could alter their epigenetic markers for the better. Researchers in Australia found that men who adopted an exercise routine for three months showed genome-wide methylation changes in their sperm cells.[24] Another group looked at how bariatric surgery changed methylation patterns in sperm. Here, researchers found that sperm methylation patterns in men were completely remodeled one year after bariatric surgery. Most notably, many of these methylation patterns were changed in genes associated with controlling appetite.[25] While there is still much more research that needs to be done to show the reversal of epigenetic markers, these initial experiments, in addition to existing methylation inheritance research, are promising that parents can reverse their unhealthy methylation patterns instead of passing healthy epigenetic markers onto their children.

In this paper, I have showcased scientific literature suggesting that unique DNA methylation patterns from parental lifestyle choices can be inherited and can increase the risk of the offspring developing obesity. Because the study of epigenetics is still in its preliminary stages, more research needs to be done to determine causality between these epigenetic markers and increased risk of obesity. Nevertheless, the strong correlation can be used as a biomarker for this risk. Furthermore, I have justified that potential parents must conserve a healthy epigenome for the next generation using the intergenerational equity rationale. Finally, I have shown how to practically apply this normative claim to everyday life across a multitude of cultural, economic, and personal limitations/preferences and how recent research supports that these applications can positively benefit heritable methylation patterns. The future generation should not be restrained by the actions of the previous generation. Therefore, parents should attempt to provide an equal opportunity of prosperity for their children with decisions they make today.

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[24] Joshua Denham et al., "Genome-Wide Sperm DNA Methylation Changes after 3 Months of Exercise Training in Humans," *Epigenomics* 7, no. 5 (April 13, 2015): 717–31, https://doi.org/10.2217/epi.15.29.

[25] Ida Donkin et al., "Obesity and Bariatric Surgery Drive Epigenetic Variation of Spermatozoa in Humans," *Cell Metabolism* 23, no. 2 (February 9, 2016): 369–78, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cmet.2015.11.004.

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Aristotle and the Voucher System

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Abstract: In this paper, I argue that Aristotle would approve of a voucher system implemented on a national level, due to the lack of moral integrity in public schools. First I identify the problem of a lack of general consensus for a moral education in the United States public school system. Next I outline Aristotle's view of a liberal education. Then I demonstrate why Aristotle would support the voucher system, because it best promotes moral flourishing. Finally I show how why the voucher system does not violate the No Establishment clause, and how this system encourages tolerance of different religious groups.

In high school I was a member of the Red Ribbon Week planning committee—a week dedicated to promoting anti-drug awareness and help for substance-abusing students. I was on staff with some of the other school club leaders in the top ten percent and honors societies. "You know nearly everyone in the top-ten percent cheats," my friend Raymond told me some time later. He was taking more advanced courses than I was with them, and told me about some of their decisions in class. "Yeah, they're all taking eight AP courses, but they have a Facebook group where they share their answers on tests, so they can help each other get into Ivy Leagues." How could high-achieving students, placed on an anti-drug awareness committee, slide by the administration for cheating and do work for a cause they possibly did not even support? Aristotle would see this as the fatal flaw in public school education—a significant lack of moral and character education. A neo-Aristotelian would argue that the voucher system is worth implementing on a national level, due to the lack of moral integrity in public schools. Aristotle's approval of the voucher system is based on his view on moral education and his conception of the good.

The current state of public school education is illiberal and damaging to a proper moral education. According to author Paul Barnwell of the *Atlantic* magazine, "since 2002, standardized-test preparation and narrowly defined academic success has been the unstated, but de facto, purpose of their schooling experience."[1] According to Barnwell, a high-school teacher, rigorous test preparation is the purpose of a public school education. This rigorous test preparation is essentially contributing to an illiberal education—students are trained to write and complete a test, not develop their intellect or moral capabilities. Barnwell states, "According to the 2012 Josephson Report Card on the Ethics of American Youth, 57 percent of teens stated that successful people do what they have to do to win, even if it involves cheating."[2] Students deprived of moral education are affected directly—the value of success replaces the value of morally good action. The cheating experience I illustrated earlier demonstrates how this culture of success is antithetical to an education

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[1] Barnwell, Paul. "Students' Broken Moral Compasses." *The Atlantic*, 25 July 2016. Accessed 5 May 2017.

[2] Ibid.

dedicated to human flourishing. These rigorous test standards are not going away soon. In this case, Aristotle would argue for a serious re-consideration about how education should be managed.

Aristotle argued that the state should facilitate a comprehensive moral education. He writes in Book VIII of the *Politics* that at first it is not clear "whether education is more concerned with intellectual or with moral excellence."[3] Aristotle is not confused about what end education should serve, namely that of moral education, but wants to illustrate that intellectual excellence closely follows and could mistakenly take the place of moral excellence. Moral excellence starts with a liberal education—which focuses on bettering oneself and edifying one's fellow students. In contrast, an illiberal education focuses on a technical skill, and directly serves a practical end in society. A moral education is primarily a liberal education, and focuses on imparting knowledge and formation to students to better themselves. "[T]o young children" Aristotle writes, "should be imparted only such kinds of knowledge as will be useful to them without making mechanics of them."[4] Here Aristotle is referring to the benefits of a liberal education over an illiberal education. A liberal education gives students the proper moral formation needed, while an illiberal education focuses on practical outputs.

Although Aristotle's social context is vastly different than ours, the problem of moral education is similar. Athens "included about 40,000 citizens, was considerably homogenous, [and] most people believed in the gods."[5] These 40,000 citizens were all men, as women and slaves were not counted as full citizens or worthy of a full education. Although there were political differences among the citizens, they were nearly homogenous in their Greek culture and religion. Education was strictly reserved for these citizens, especially the wealthy. However, by Aristotle's time in the 4th century BC, education was in need of serious reform. The "practical arts of literacy and arithmetic were pursued for economic advantage over fellow Athenians," and liberal arts such as "rhetoric [were] sought for utility in a career of political influence and honor."[6] Clearly, the social context of the *Politics*, although vastly different from our own, has the same problem of a declining moral education for its citizens. Athenians during Aristotle's time used their educational skills for career advancement, and not for the formation of themselves as good citizens. Given this context, Aristotle sets his sights on what an ideal education would look like for Athenians.

Aristotle argues for the moral reform of public education. He acknowledges the plurality in education during his time, that for "the character of public education, the existing practice is perplexing—should the useful in life or should excellence be the aim of our training?"[7] Aristotle acknowledges the divide during 4th century Athens over an illiberal education focused on practical ends, and a liberal education focused on the formation of a person. His work of Book VIII in the politics focuses on the providing an ideal liberal

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[3] Aristotle. *The Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Print, 195.

[4] Ibid, 196.

[5] Gotz, Ignacio. "On Aristotle and Public Education." *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, vol. 22, 2003, 77.

[6] Curren, Randall. *Aristotle on the Necessity of Public Education*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000. Print, 13-14.

[7] Aristotle, *Politics*, 195.

education for students, and saving practical ends for later in life. One objection is that Aristotle never mentions reform of private education, only public. The "democratization of Athens brought with it the introduction of group lessons as a more affordable alternative to traditional one-on-one instruction [in private schooling]," and by Aristotle's time public education provided by the state made more economic sense than the private schooling of a select group of individuals"[8] Thus, for Aristotle, private schools were not economically feasible during his time, and could not function to provide the liberal and moral education that he envisioned. It was not that Aristotle was completely against reforming private education; it was simply not economically feasible during his time period. However, there are significant differences between the American social context and Aristotle's social context.

Education is on a vastly wider scale for American society, and is seen as a right for all citizens. American society is "enormously large and complex," and not culturally homogenous like the Greeks.[9] When our society envisions a common end, that of making good citizens, it needs to take into account our massive plurality. The role of education in our society needs to take into account this plurality, alongside molding good citizens. In order to meet the "subsidiary needs of the people at large," it is necessary that "some forms [of education] will be public and some private"[10] Public education in American society undertakes the massive role of providing for all citizens—which includes tens of millions more than the 40,000 upper-class males of Greek society. The subsidiary needs of America—that of providing the best possible education to all citizens at a local level—requires a rethinking of the role of private schools, and their role alongside public education in providing proper formation of good citizens. In order to provide for the subsidiary needs of good citizenry, Aristotle would emphasize the importance of community.

An educational community must be small in size and focused on building the habits of its students. For a city or community to be focused on the good life, it must have a stable population. A "very populous city can rarely be well governed…since all cities which have a reputation for good government have a limit of population"[11]An educational community must not be so exceptionally large that it cannot meet the needs for its students. Another requirement for Aristotle is that a community focuses on the well being of its members. The "work of education" is that students "learn some things by habit and some by instruction."[12] The well being of students is tied to the habits and character instruction they receive in school. Habits of excellence in school, along with moral education, are best realized through this local community. In the present day, Aristotle would argue that the voucher system is necessary in order to allow these moral communities to flourish.

The voucher system is used to allow small moral communities to flourish alongside the public school system. One objection is that the voucher system will be used to usurp the public school system. Anti-voucher proponents argue that "[p]ublic schools are vested with our hopes for an educated citizenry [and] private schools simply do not have

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[8] Curren, *Aristotle on the Necessity of Public Education*, 12.

[9] Gotz, "On Aristotle and Public Education," 78.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Aristotle, *Politics*, 172.

[12] Ibid., 185.

the capacity to educate the majority of our children."[13] Those who are against the voucher system claim that it is a guise to overthrow the public school system for private and religious schools. However, from a pro-voucher perspective, the voucher system is more concerned with providing funding for small moral communities. Community involves not "the whole of society, but rather the members of one's own group"[14] Funding a nationwide voucher system is not directed against the public school system and "whole of society," but rather gives the chance for smaller communities to flourish and develop superior educational systems. These smaller communities provide the moral education that Aristotle is concerned with, along with meeting the rigorous test standards of state's educational requirements.

Aristotle would argue that funding religious and private schools through the voucher system gives more students the opportunity for better moral and academic formation. In addition to the moral education in religious schools, recent research shows how religious schools can likewise step up to the plate of high standards for academic excellence. A study by "William Evans and Robert Schab of the University of Maryland concluded that attending a Catholic high school raises the probability of finishing high school or entering a four-year college by 12 percentage points."[15] It is clear that religious schools such as Catholic high schools can provide academic excellence alongside moral formation. Even more so, these schools provide a small moral community for families to get involved with. "Community brings forth altruism," and "religious schools draw from parents as well as teachers increased attentiveness to children's educational progress."[16] Religious schools provide both a focus on moral and academic excellence. However, is there a strong enough need in American society for private and religious schools? Do public schools not provide enough moral and academic formation for students?

Private schools address the plurality of American society and allow proper moral formation. One objection is that public schools address American plurality better than private schools. There is a current consensus that only public schools can provide a "common national and civic identity," and provide the virtues necessary for a good citizenry.[17] The public school is seen as a melting pot for all Americans, and students learn to be good citizens through interacting with various others in a shared general American identity. Moral formation is left to these student interactions—public schools no longer seek to teach morality through fear of compromising plurality. However, contrary to this ideal, research from the University of Chicago shows that there is a greater commitment to plurality and moral formation in private schools. "Private education contribute[s] to stronger self-identities and self-esteem…research on tolerance shows that stronger self-esteem produced by a strong identity can be associated with a greater tolerance for others."[18] Private education

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[13] *School Vouchers vs. Public Education: A Citizen's Anti-Voucher Kit*. The National Committee for Public Education and Religious Liberty. 1999. Print, 9.

[14] Brandl, John. "Governance and Educational Equality." *Learning from School Choice*, edited by Paul E. Peterson and Bryan C. Hassel, The Brookings Institute, 1998, 71.

[15] Ibid, 73.

[16] Ibid., 74.

[17] Greene, Jay P. "Civic Values in Public and Private Schools." *Learning from School Choice*, edited by Paul E. Peterson and Byran C. Hassel, The Brookings Institute, 1998, 90.

[18] Ibid.

builds the identities of students to be strong Catholics, Jews, African-Americans or other ethnic minorities. In turn, this builds their civic virtue for tolerance and identities as good Americans. Moral formation is not left up to the interactions within public schools, and can be taught efficiently through teachers and parent participation in the educational community. However, there is disagreement to whether or not funding these private schools would harm church-state relationships.

In Aristotle's social context, the telos of education was for moral formation and not for advancing religious dogma. An objection is that the voucher system would be used to advance religious dogma. However, from a neo-Aristotelian standpoint, education is for the telos of moral formation. Greek cities "knew neither Church nor dogma and were generally tolerant of unbelief."[19] There was no church hierarchy or religious orthodoxy during Aristotle's time period. Although ethnically homogenous, no religious creed or single deity was held in common by all Greeks. In contrast, the "fundamental concern in fourth-century Greece was how to create political stability and social unity," in light of the "aftermath of the Peloponnesian War [which] brought down governments with regularity."[20] The philosophers and politicians during Aristotle's time period were more concerned about moral formation for a good citizenry among Athenians, and not the implantation of religious dogma or polytheistic values. The moral formation for Aristotle in education does not include dogma, and is instead for the excellence of a city. The "more excellent a city is, the happier it is," and this starts with the "excellence [of] an individual."[21] Thus, for Aristotle, moral formation makes excellent citizens, which makes an excellent city that is ultimately socially cohesive.

A main objection to a voucher system, however, is the claim that the use of a voucher system violates the No Establishment clause for separation of church and state in American society. While a valid objection, funding private and religious schools through the voucher system does not violate neutrality towards religion or the No Establishment Clause. During the 1960s, a number of Supreme Court decisions established neutrality towards religion in public schools. The American Association of School Administrators filed a report on the court decisions, stating, "that every school district [should] develop constructive policy which will guarantee freedom from the establishment of religion but equally will foster for religion."[22] The movement towards neutrality in religion, therefore, does allow the fostering of religion in public schools and not only promotion of the No Establishment clause. Ideally the teaching of morality is permissible, provided that it covers the plurality of belief systems within a school; however, in practice, this has not been the case. Dr. Thomas Hunt, Associate Professor of Social and Historical Foundations of Education at Virginia Tech, argues, "that public schools have emphasized, without ill intent, the "No Establishment" clause of the First Amendment at the expense of the "Free Exercise" clause."[23] The emphasis on religious neutrality since the 1960s has not allowed the free exercise of religion or moral education necessary for students. Public schools have

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[19] Curren, *Aristotle on the Necessity of Public Education*, 220.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Aristotle, *Politics*, 168.

[22] Hunt, Thomas C. "Public Schools and Moral Education: An American Dilemma." *Religious Education*, vol. 74, no. 4, 1979, 361.

[23] Ibid., 372.

stressed the No Establishment clause to address plurality to the expense of teaching moral education. Aristotle would argue against this, and approve of the voucher system as the suitable means to addressing this issue.

Aristotle would argue that the telos of religious and private schools is not religious indoctrination, but the moral formation of its students. One example of school system that emphasizes moral formation is the Jesuit school system, which educates for morally formed citizenry without Catholic religious indoctrination. In fact, they have even educated figures who are vehemently anti-Catholic, such as "Voltaire [and] Descartes in France," and "in the U.S. it would be ludicrous to maintain that Jesuit schools such as Fordham Prep and Brooklyn Prep in New York City do not foster in their students a strong commitment to the ideals of the U.S. Constitution"[24] The Jesuit school system produces good citizenry out of a pluralistic number of students, while maintaining its commitments to the U.S. Constitution. Aristotle would approve of a public policy to provide parents the choice to send students to a Jesuit school with vouchers, seeing that this school system has an upmost commitment to moral formation. For Aristotle, the "citizen should be molded to suit the form of government under which he lives," for a citizen is formed with a "character of democracy" and "always the better [his] character, the better the government."[25] Religious and private schools clearly create the character in students to serve not only their communities, but also the system of American democracy.

In conclusion, Aristotle would argue that there is a strong need for moral education not provided by public schools, and would approve the implementation of a national voucher system. The current state of public school education is focused on meeting test standards, and pushing the No Establishment clause to the point that moral education can no longer be taught. Although Aristotle's social context was vastly different, his concern for moral education is just as salient for ancient Athens as it is for our time. He would argue that the voucher system allows small moral communities to flourish, and that the telos for education is for moral and academic formation not for religious indoctrination. Moreover, funding private and religious schools cultivates the virtue of tolerance more than public schools, by building strong self-identities and self-esteem in students. Funding these schools does not violate Supreme Court decisions on religious neutrality, nor does it go against the No Establishment clause. The recent political movement for a national voucher system is something Aristotle would see as conducive towards providing a full education for American citizens. Without moral formation, education becomes a bureaucratic system to meet testing standards, a means to acquire success and power, and an experiment in unrestrained pluralism that ignores the need for small communities and habit-forming character development.

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[24] Gotz, "On Aristotle and Public Education," 79.

[25] Aristotle, *Politics,* 195.

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Nondual Awareness: A Path Towards A More Compassionate Ethics

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Abstract: In this paper, I aim to formulate an alternative frame of reference for understanding ourselves as different manifestations of being and provide an opportunity for reflecting upon the need for a nondualistic perspective that unites, rather than divides, phenomena. I will present the failures of rationalism in its attempt to account for the true nature of reality. I will also present a critique of our general inclination, informed by rationalism, towards viewing language itself as an objective means of apprehending phenomena. Alternatively, I argue, we can adopt varying practices to facilitate nondual awareness, or NDA, and place ourselves in a position from which we can better apprehend the phenomena we experience. This achievement of NDA has the potential for increasing the cognitive mental states responsible for our feelings of compassion, connection, and identification towards others.

Our current Western conception of knowledge, as purely based on rationalism, relies on flawed assumptions reinforced by language. By reanalyzing the importance of a variety of experiences that lie outside of the field of rationalism, we can expand our understanding of the true nature of our nondualistic reality and challenge the underlying assumptions that incorrectly yield a dualistic understanding of phenomena. In adopting a nondualistic frame of reference, we can improve our ethical orientation towards other beings, our environments, and ourselves, enacting behaviors that are more inclusive and compassionate. An inclusive and compassionate ethics is imperative in order to deconstruct a hierarchy of being[1] and equally view all manifestations of being.

Particularly in the West, given the criteria of rationality, we tend to affirm some experiences over others. The characterization of rationality typically entails an accurate, true representation of "fact" of the particular idea that is apprehended and of its relevant factors. William James describes rationalism as the following: "Rationalism insists that all our beliefs ought ultimately to find for themselves articulate grounds. Such grounds, for rationalism, must consist of four things: (1) definitely statable abstract principles; (2) definite facts of sensation; (3) definite hypotheses based on such facts; and (4) definite inferences logically drawn."[2]

My critique here is not on rationalism itself but rather on our tendency to place rationalism as the sole basis for attaining knowledge. By solely emphasizing rationalism and using this theory as the basis for knowledge, we deny other valuable forms of knowledge,

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[1] Many individuals have implicitly perpetuated the idea of hierarchy among sentient beings – See Charles Darwin, "On the Origin of Species," in *Principles of Biology*, (1864) – while others have explicitly adhered to the belief of a hierarchy by adopting an anthropocentric philosophy, or placing the value of human beings above all sentient and non-sentient beings.

[2] William James, "The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature, Being the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion Delivered at Edinburgh in 1901-02." (Longmans, Green and Co., 1929) 53-73.

which rationalism cannot explain. I reject a sole focus on rationalism on two grounds: 1) it draws a necessary relation between knowledge and one's ability to express an experience; 2) it (incorrectly) assumes that there are truths independent of all other phenomena, which we can come to apprehend and consequently express accurately.

Rationalism defines knowledge based on what can be expressed via language. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature,* James states, "Vague impressions of something indefinable have no place in the rationalistic system… Nevertheless, if we look on man's whole mental life as it exists, on the life of men that lies in them apart from their learning and science, and that they inwardly and privately follow, we have to confess that the part of it of which rationalism can give an account is relatively superficial."[3]
A proponent of rationalism would argue that, because I might lack the ability to express an experience, it could not be said that I have knowledge of this experience. This is simply not the case. There is certainly a range of experiences that can be said to either supersede language, or altogether lie outside of the field of tools of expression. It would not follow from this simply to conclude that these experiences do not yield knowledge. Instead, we should conclude that it is possible that these experiences yield knowledge outside of the realm of rationalism. Therefore, these experiences require an entirely new perspective.

In *The Sun My Heart*, Thich Nhat Hanh emphasizes the experiences we cannot express via language. He states, "Understanding is not an aggregate of bits of knowledge. It is a direct and immediate penetration… It is an intuition rather than the culmination of reasoning. Every now and again it is fully present in us, and we find we cannot express it in words, thoughts, or concepts."[4] Rationalism can only account for a small subset of experiences which can be expressed via language, and by attempting to understand the entirety of our knowledge based on this small subset, we are severely limiting ourselves.

A further downfall in the emphasis on rationalism in discussions of knowledge is the underlying assumption that there are independent truths that we can apprehend and express. Zhuangzi critiques our conception of knowledge by emphasizing our flawed perspectives and the lack of objective truth in them, describing our understanding of phenomena as highly subjective. He states, "Everything has its 'that,' everything has its 'this.' From the point of view of 'that' you cannot see it, but through understanding you can know it. So I say, 'that' comes out of 'this' and 'this' depends on 'that' — which is to say that 'this' and 'that' give birth to each other." [5] In other words, from my particular standpoint, I understand my perspective as "this," while also understanding another individual's perspective as "that." Similarly, the other individual understands her own experiences through the divide of "this" and "that," taking ownership of her own experience and differentiating that which is "other".

This separation of subject and object, of "this" and "that," of what is "mine" and what is "yours," is reinforced by our dualistic language, thoughts, and perceptions, and has a definitive effect in our ability to engage and/or identify with our surroundings. Based on

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[3] James, "The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature, Being the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion Delivered at Edinburgh in 1901-02," 53-73.

[4] Thich Nhat Hanh, "The Sun My Heart: Reflections on Mindfulness, Concentration, and Insight." (Parallax Press, 2010) 42-65.

[5] Zhuangzi, "Zhuangzi: Basic Writings," ed. by Burton Watson (Columbia University Press, 2003) 23-70.

conventional language, calling my own experience "this" and another's "that" is useful in interacting in our daily lives. Yet, it creates an irreconcilable divide between perspectives because we take our own individual perspective to be the objective truth and impose it onto larger society, failing to see our understanding as subjective. We have no tool to measure which of these perspectives is "best," since best is a relative measurement and both are equally subjective. In the end, we arbitrarily decide what we deem to be "truth." Therefore, an account of rationalism fails because the "truth" it attempts to reveal is itself subjective despite rationalists' best effort to claim otherwise.

Beyond the subjectivity of perspectives, Zhuangzi also discusses the ways in which language itself fails us. Even if it were the case that we were able to find some sort of measuring tool by which to distinguish between the truth of two perspectives, our linguistic tool to express that truth is itself limiting. Watson states, "Zhuangzi insists that language is in the end grievously inadequate to describe the true Way," or, in this case, the true nature of reality. It is inadequate in that it does not yield an exact representation of the knowledge we claim to apprehend about our reality. Zhuangzi states, "A road is made by people walking on it; things are so because they are called so. What makes them so? Making them so makes them so. What makes them not so? Making them not so makes them not so."[6] Ultimately, we are responsible for attaching meaning to the words we use but we should not confuse those words and their meanings, and, consequently, what is expressed in our created language, for true reality.

The meanings we give to words is dependent upon other relevant factors, e.g. background information, situational context, other individuals, etc. Given our subjective experiences and the ways in which language and meaning is fluid and ever changing, it is incorrect to assume that the language we use as a conventional tool is itself without flaws. Furthermore, our assumption that language is able to yield an exact representation of reality leads us to a false understanding of reality as it is. This becomes apparent in a further analysis of our linguistic structure.

The very structure of our affirmations are in subject-predicate form, introducing multiplicity, and, more importantly, dualism. We, as humans, tend to have particular difficulties uniting differences. It is much simpler for us to separate differences and systematize patterns based on similarities. In doing so, we create dualisms, e.g. "black" or "white," "me" or "you," "this" or "that," etc. Given the nature of our language and the grammatical structures we uphold, there exists a dualism (which we create) between *subject* and *object*.

Thus, this dualism is created and does not actually represent the true nature of reality. It is merely conventionally useful. Hanh emphasizes the following: "In daily life, we have grown used to a way of thinking and expressing ourselves that is based on the idea that everything is independent of everything else. This way of thinking and speaking makes it difficult to penetrate non-dualistic, non-discriminatory reality, a reality which cannot be contained in concepts."[7] The dualisms we have created are then confused as truly independent concepts of phenomena believed to accurately mirror reality as it is. For example, we tend to deem a phenomenon as "black" or "white," and given our difficulty in apprehending the gray areas in between, we incorrectly believe this phenomenon to be *either* "black" *or* "white"—and we deem it to be so in reality. However, reality itself is not dualistic—only our

[6] Zhuangzi, "Zhuangzhi: Basic Writings," 23-70.

[7] Hanh, "The Sun My Heart: Reflections on Mindfulness, Concentration, and Insight," 42-65.

concepts, mental representations, language, etc. represent it as such.

Language is only a tool we use to express the abstractions obtained from our apprehension, and in the process of becoming aware of a concept, abstracting that concept, attaining a mental representation of it, and then expressing it via language, the true nature of the concept is lost. James explains that abstract ideas "form the background for all our facts… Everything we know is 'what' it is by sharing in the nature of one of these abstractions. We can never look directly at them, for they are bodiless and featureless and footless, but we grasp all other things by their means."[8]

This deeply rooted dualistic frame of reference affects the ways in which we interact with our environments and even the compassion we feel towards others and ourselves. Despite the ways in which our abstractions and the consequent mental representations we obtain are inaccurate, many individuals have experienced a different form of apprehending the world around them, one that is not tied to the dualism between subject and object which is reinforced by language. It is possible to adopt an alternative perspective.

Hanh states, "To be aware is to be aware of something. When the mind settles on the mountain, it becomes the mountain…When we say 'know,' both the known and the knower are included."[9] We might dismiss this way of thinking because of its apparent implausibility, but a closer look will reveal the wisdom it carries and the benefits it yields. Hanh provides a nondualistic understanding of reality in which we *are* the awareness of our minds. The subject (the knower) that perceives the mountain is the same as the object (the known) that is being perceived. This is an understanding of consciousness as "consciousness-of," and through such a view, the subject and the object involved in thought are interdependent.

Given that thought itself includes both the subject (the knower) and the object (the known), this distinction of one as "subject" and another as "object" is misguided. We cannot distinguish between that which is "inner" and that which is "outer." If only the thought is present, we cannot distinguish that "I" (the thinker) is separate from the "mountain" (the thought). A closer analysis will reveal the following: there is no "I" involved in the process of thinking. There is merely the thought occurring regarding perception. We cannot separate the perceiver and the object of perception. There is only perception.

No dualism exists in reality itself. It is only created because of our experience of perception—an experience we describe with a dualistic frame of reference. Hanh further discusses this point by stating, "In the phenomenal world, things seem to exist as separate entities which have a specific place: 'This' on the outside of 'that.' When we deeply penetrate the principle of interdependence, we see that this sense of separateness is false. Each object is composed of and contains all others."[10]

By reanalyzing experiential knowledge, we can include experiences of subject-object nondualism, such as the ones Hanh describes. Once we have deconstructed this false dichotomy between subject and object, we can also rid ourselves of the categories we create. In *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind,* Suzuki states, "'You' means to be aware of the universe in the form of you, and 'I' means to be aware of it in the form of 'I.' You and I are just swinging doors. This kind of understanding is necessary. This should not even be called understand-

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[8] James, "The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature, Being the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion Delivered at Edinburgh in 1901-02," 53-73.

[9] Hanh, "The Sun My Heart: Reflections on Mindfulness, Concentration, and Insight," 42-65.

[10] Hanh, "The Sun My Heart: Reflections on Mindfulness, Concentration, and Insight," 42-65.

ing; it is actually the true experience of life."[11] Suzuki believes that the "true experience of life" is characterized by nondual awareness. Hanh described the lack of divide between the mountain, as object, and the person, as subject. Similarly, here Suzuki breaks down the dualism between what one might view as "oneself" and "others".

A being is a process of experiences, actions, emotions, etc. that is dependent upon many other factors. Therefore, both "I" and "you" are manifestations of being that rely upon one another and upon other manifestations. In this sense, "I" cannot exist without "you", and an awareness of this interdependence breaks down the dualism between subject and object and opens up the possibility for a different state of consciousness that is nondualistic.

Imagine the changes that would result in this experience of unity. A nondualistic perspective forms a foundation for deconstructing a hierarchy of being, which we often incorrectly reinforce. It is clear that, given a dualistic perspective in which subject and object are separate, categories regarding different forms of being are consequently drawn. In drawing these categories, we place some beings above others, and attach different value systems to these categories. Yet, we have already seen the ways in which this dualistic perspective is not only inadequate in expressing the true nature of reality, but is also limiting in allowing us to find "truth" outside of our subjective experiences. The alternative is adopting a nondualistic perspective, which has the potential to yield a more inclusive ethics by ridding itself of the need to categorize and divide.

James states, "All our attitudes, moral, practical, or emotional, as well as religious, are due to the 'objects' of our consciousness, the things which we believe to exist, whether really or ideally, along with ourselves. Such objects may be present to our senses, or they may be present only to our thought. In either case they elicit from us a *reaction;* and the reaction due to things of thought is notoriously in many cases as strong as that due to sensible presences."[12] For this reason, the ways in which we apprehend the true nature of reality and what we deem to be "knowledge" directly affect how we engage in our communities and interact with our environments.

Once we have validated experiences that cannot be explained through rationalism, we can value alternative ways of connecting and identifying with other beings. By opening our minds to viewing the world with a nondualistic frame of reference, even despite the ever-present dualisms in our patterns of thought and language, we can begin to shift our habitually dualistic orientations towards others and engage in actions that are more compassionate. An experience of inclusivity, one that entails others as well as oneself (equally), has the potential for significantly improving our feelings of compassion, and thereby our interests in the wellbeing of humans, nonhuman animals, ecosystems, and environments. Subject-object nondualism can seem very abstract and perhaps even unattainable, yet it does entail *practical* implications.

Miller explains the benefits of nondual awareness, specifically gained through the consistent practice of mindfulness: "Non-dual mindfulness seeks to collapse perceptual dualism by exposing it directly from within the field of awareness. Non-dual meditative methods develop three important characteristics of genuine mental health: (1) receptivity to the flow of phenomena, (2) enhanced metacognitive surveying of mental processes, and (3) recognition

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[11] Shunryu Suzuki, et al. "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind." (Shambhala, 2011) 28-55.

[12] James, "The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature, Being the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion Delivered at Edinburgh in 1901-02," 53-73.

of the innate reflexivity of awareness or what is known as 'awareness of awareness.'"[13]

Given the psychological benefits of adopting a nondual perspective, researchers have developed a newfound interest to further understand nondual awareness and how this state of consciousness can be achieved. Josipovic,[14] a research scientist at New York University, has devoted his research efforts to analyzing fMRI images of the neural pathways in the brains of Buddhist monks who consistently achieve nondual awareness through their meditative practice. Josipovic tracks "the changes in the networks in the brain as the person shifts between modes of attention" and this shift between "the internal and external networks in the brain concurrently may lead the monks to experience a harmonious feeling of oneness with their environment."[15] Essentially, Josipovic has found that, through the practice of nondual awareness meditations, these individuals have successfully affected their habitual mental capacities to shift towards a more compassionate cognitive mental state.

In his research, Josipovic has found that nondual awareness, or NDA, is an alternative "background awareness that precedes conceptualization and intention and that can contextualize various perceptual, affective, or cognitive contents without fragmenting the field of experience into habitual dualities."[16] In other words, NDA is a background awareness that is prior to our conceptualization, categorization, and division of phenomena. It is readily accessible to us through practice and meditation. Josipovic explains that the emphasis on duality is "variously understood as being due to a basic identification of one's self with one's body and mind, or due to a notion of an independently existing self in persons and objects, or due to a grammatical structure of language that inevitably organizes cognition along a subject-object dichotomy."[17]

A true understanding and experience of nondualism means not only a deeply felt connection with other manifestations of being (whether it be a nonhuman animal, an ecosystem, or an environment), but also a *commitment* to compassion. Bob Douglas argues, "we need to engineer a transition from the current, nearly universal human mindset, which sees humans as the superior species in total control of our planet, to a new operating paradigm where we recognize our utter dependence on healthy ecosystems and make their nurture central to our culture."[18] I believe that this paradigm can be found in nondualism, and through the practice of NDA, as "Man becomes one with Nature."[19]

An example of such a practice is presented in *Bodhicaryavatara*, in which Santideva, an individual in traditional Buddhist thought believed to be the embodiment of compassion, addresses the cultivation of compassion towards all beings. He states, "At first one should

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[13] Lisa Dale Miller, "Effortless Mindfulness: Genuine Mental Health through Awakened Presence." (Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2004) 100-105.

[14] Z. Josipovic, "Neural correlates of nondual awareness in mediation." (Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci., 2014) 9-18.

[15] Matt Danzico, "Brains of Buddhist Monks Scanned in Meditation Study." *BBC News,* BBC, 24 Apr. 2011, www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-12661646.

[16] Josipovic, "Neural correlates of nondual awareness in meditation," 9-18.

[17] Josipovic, "Neural correlates of nondual awareness in meditation," 9-18.

[18] Bob Douglas, "Transforming Human Society From Anthropocentrism to Ecocentrism: Can We Make It Happen In Time?" *Health of People, Places and Planet: Reflection Based on Tony Mcmichael's Four Decades of Contribution to Epidemiological Understanding.* Ed. 600-610.

[19] Zhuangzi, "Zhuangzhi: Basic Writings," 23-70.

meditate intently on the equality of oneself and others as follows: 'All equally experience suffering and happiness. I should look after them as I do myself'… When happiness is liked by me and others equally, what is so special about me that I strive after happiness only for myself?"[20]

Hanh suggests a similar meditative practice: "The key point is never to let your awareness stand apart from whatever you regard as the object of awareness. Once you are aware, body, mountain top, or flowing river, all become your mind."[21] Josipovic's research suggests that this nondual awareness, which deconstructs the dichotomy between subject and object, is often felt as "oneness" with, or as being deeply connected to, one's environment. Therefore, the cognitive changes that occur in nondual awareness have a direct effect on an individual's affect, attitude, and emotional disposition towards their surroundings. This "connection" with one's surroundings yields a more compassionate form of interacting with the environment and the beings manifested within.

All experiences are subjective and all experiences are equal. There is no need to value one over the other or to care more about one subset of being over another. Given the true nature of reality and the ways in which all beings are dependent on all others, compassion for oneself necessitates compassion for another. Nondual awareness is a step towards a more inclusive, compassionate ethics, but it requires a thorough commitment to deconstruct habitual and societal dualistic practices set in place to categorize and divide.
Cook emphasizes, "There has to be an ongoing effort to achieve this consciousness in moment after moment of activity and encounter."[22] Similarly, Rita M. Gross argues, "Taking interdependence seriously urges us to apply 'both-and' solutions rather than 'either-or' arguments to knotty problems."[23] I am not suggesting merely a meditative practice in isolation from the world, but rather a renewed effort to account for concerns regarding humans, nonhuman animals, and ecosystems *equally* in our attempts to solve the problems we face on a daily basis.

As Cook states, "Compassion carries the commitment to *do* something about suffering."[24] There is no limit to our compassion. By misguidedly reinforcing the idea of dualism, we are operating under the flawed assumption that we cannot equally care about the well-being of humans and nonhuman animals/ecosystems. A genuine experience of nondualism is one where there is no divide between the human world and the natural world, especially since humans are merely a part of nature itself, and we are all merely different manifestations of being. A commitment to cultivating patterns of thought and action that yield compassion leads us on a path towards a more inclusive ethics.

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[20] Santideva, "The Bodhicaryavatara." Edited by Kate Crosby. (Oxford University Press, 1995).

[21] Hanh, "The Sun My Heart: Reflections on Mindfulness, Concentration, and Insight," 42-65.

[22] Dogen, "Sounds of Valley Streams: Enlightenment in Dogen's Zen, Translation of Nine Essays from Shobogenzo." Edited by Francis H. Cook. (State University of New York Press, 1989).

[23] R.M. Gross, "Toward a Buddhist Environmental Ethic." In *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 65.2 (1997): 333-53.

[24] Dogen, "Sounds of Valley Streams: Enlightenment in Dogen's Zen, Translation of Nine Essays from Shobogenzo." Edited by Francis H. Cook.

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Medical Care and Multiculturalism

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Abstract: One issue that arises in the practice of medicine in a culturally diverse society is whether, and to what extent, should healthcare professionals respect their patients' treatment choices, particularly when these choices reflect their cultural and religious worldviews. Are there moral limits to accommodating the medical decisions of patients when they are motivated by cultural and religious beliefs which conflict with those of the medical community? In this paper, I argue that there ought to be moral boundaries on what kinds of medical decisions ought to be tolerated and therefore accommodated by medical professionals. They should be culturally accommodating to the extent that doing so does not lead to the harm of the patient. Also, accommodations should be made if the medical knowledge is not continuously reliable and replicable. First, I will review the moral principles that support this proposed position. Second, I will address the issue of how understandings of health and disease can vary among cultures. Third, I will defend the position that there ought to be moral limits to what kind of patient requests ought to be accommodated by medical professionals and how this position would be translated in practice.

In Anne Fadiman's book, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, the case of an epileptic Hmong child named Lia Lee outlines the challenges of practicing medicine in a culturally diverse environment. The experience of the Lee family, like that of many others, was complicated by cultural barriers, such as issues with cultural sensitivity or different notions of disease. The most critical aspects of their case were those dealing with informed consent and decision-making delegation to family members. In this paper, the point I will argue is that while medical cultural accommodation should be preferable, medical treatment should only be culturally accommodating to the extent that doing so does not lead to the harm of the patient and is based on the best medical knowledge available. First, I will review the principles that support my reasoning. Then I will address how broadly the definitions of disease and disability can vary among cultures. Finally, I will bring attention to the moral implications and limits of informed consent and decision making by detailing a protocol that healthcare professionals should adopt to be more efficient in treating and helping these patients.

According to Beauchamp and Walters and the Belmont Report, treating a patient in an ethical way must follow three basic principles: autonomy, beneficence, and non-maleficence. The principle of autonomy compels medical professionals to recognize and respect the patient's right to make an informed decision regarding what they wish to have done to their body in regard to medical treatment. The principle of beneficence compels medical professionals to treat patients in a way that promotes the patient's best health interest. The principle of non-maleficence is reflected in the instruction of "first, do no harm." Physicians have many goals when treating a patient, such as caring for the patient in the respect of extending their life. This can be achieved through invasive procedures or by ensuring

the patient is compliant with the treatment. The physician must also stay in line with the wishes of their patient, which sometimes requires them to conduct palliative care.

Although the three principles of autonomy, beneficence, and non-maleficence are useful general guidelines to shape the medical treatment of patients, the principles are not specific enough to provide moral guidance in how physicians ought to tailor the treatment plan of patients coming from diverse cultural backgrounds. One of the profound issues of Lia Lee's case is that patients, due to their culture, might have dramatically different conceptions of health and disease from those of the medical community. This will lead to patients seriously opposing the recommendations of their doctors. In this kind of dilemma, how should physicians approach the treatment of their patients? The three principles seem to prescribe conflicting recommendations. A mere appeal to autonomy would seem to press doctors to respect the decisions of their patients even if they are most likely wrong. But a mere appeal to beneficence or non-maleficence would seem to press doctors to be paternalistic and override patient autonomy for the sake of promoting patient health. To make more precise specifications of how to treat culturally diverse patients, we must consider other normative commitments in addition to the three general principles.

In advocating for an approach that is accommodating to patients and their cultural backgrounds, one must first recognize that culture is not a means to stereotype a patient, which leads to treating the patient with less than optimal care. For instance, an African American pregnant woman might be misdiagnosed with hypertension instead of pre-eclampsia, simply because African Americans have a tendency for higher blood pressure.[1] This tendency of using generalization is noticed by African American patients, which creates distrust in their provider. This distrust, in turn, could lead African American patients to not disclose important information. If this happens, the doctor might create a situation that is detrimental to their patient's health.

Therefore, under no circumstances should healthcare providers assume anything about a patient. They should be as unbiased as possible and avoid the cultural imperialism of imposing their own cultural beliefs onto others. For instance, a common stereotype of Hispanic women is that they exaggerate the expression of their pain.[2] Thus, their pronouncement of the level of pain being experienced is expected to be inaccurate. But it seems plainly wrong for a physician to treat their patient according to this stereotype. If a woman with Hispanic features is crying in pain, medical professionals should recognize such expressions as genuine pain and ought to respond appropriately, irrespective of the negative stereotypes of Hispanic people. From an ethical point of view, it is morally impermissible to treat patients with different qualities of care based on groundless assumptions and biases a doctor might have.

Instead of these stereotypes, what should be implemented in our medical practices is cultural sensitivity. It is worth pointing out that cultural sensitivity and negative stereotypes are drastically different. Cultural sensitivity is about being aware of differences in values that influence one's idea of, understanding of, and approach to health. Negative ste-

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[1] Martin, Nina, and Renee Montagne. 2017. "U.S. Black Mothers Die In Childbirth At Three Times The Rate Of White Mothers : NPR."

[2] Metzl, Jonathan M, and Dorothy E Roberts. 2014. "Structural Competency Meets Structural Racism: Race, Politics, and the Structure of Medical Knowledge." *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics* 16 (9): 674–90.

reotyping, on the other hand, is labeling a person based on a bias, which can be instilled through education, poor experiences, or social currency. Therefore, racism, negative stereotyping against ethnicity, or heterosexism, negative stereotyping based on sexual orientation, are ethically impermissible and against the provider's professional integrity. These negative stereotypes, which are often invoked following mere observations of physical or social attributes (e.g., race or culture), push doctors to provide less than optimum care and therefore could be extremely harmful.

In practicing culturally sensitivity, medical professionals recognize that there may be very different cultural understandings of disease and disability. I argue that this is necessary to improve overall physician-patient communication, help physicians direct their patient's health care, and encourage patients to be more open to compliance. It is difficult, if not impossible, to find a universal definition of health across all medical cultures. "Health" is defined as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."[3] The definition of "disease" or "infirmity" is much more complicated to define. In the scientific field, *disease* has usually been defined as the loss of homeostasis of the body. Intuitively, we recognize that this also includes trauma and certain disabilities that disrupt the "normal" body prototype. However, it is foolish to think that other cultures might not hold other definitions of health, disability, and disease. For instance, epilepsy is conventionally understood by our medical community to be a harmful, undesirable neurological condition. Conversely, the Hmong believe, just as the Ancient Greeks did, that epilepsy is a sacred disease.[4] Both cultures recognize that it is a disease, but in the Hmong culture, there is prestige attached to epilepsy, since it opens up the potential vocation of being a Shaman. In the example of Lia, her parents rushed her to the emergency room when she was seizing (they recognized it as a medical issue), but they also believed her to carry a kind of sacred gift. Knowing this cultural aspect, physicians would interact with better awareness of and attentiveness to the Lee family, leading to many improvements to Lia's care and potentially changes in her outcome. For instance, they could have had a Shaman present at some point in her treatment and could have discussed treatment options with the parents. In doing so, they would be recognizing Lia as a gifted child while also preserving her wellbeing.

Differences in definitions of health and disease are not the only issues that arise in physician-patient relationships involving patients from different cultural backgrounds. It is also important to recognize the significant degree of epistemic uncertainty in many medical diagnoses. Many experts on the healthcare system, medical schools, hospitals, and insurance companies, are coming to the realization that doctors are human and therefore make mistakes. Literature on this topic reveals the intricacies of making a correct diagnosis or treatment despite the occasional uncertainty of the very people who often believe that they are infallible.[5] Dr. Jerome Groopman's *How Doctors Think* reveals the fallibility and epistemic finitude of doctors when deciding how to treat their patients. One notable case is when Groopman had pain in his back and his doctors could not make a diagnosis.[6]

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[3] "WHO | Constitution of WHO: Principles." 2016. *WHO*. World Health Organization.

[4] Anne Fadiman. 2012. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures.*

[5] Shem, Samuel. 1978. *The House of God*. Delta Trade Paperbacks.

[6] Groopman, Jerome E. 2008. *How Doctors Think*. Houghton Mifflin.

Each physician he visited had a different diagnosis. Eventually, his physicians resorted to inventing a diagnosis and even doing invasive surgery. This type of scenario was also viewed in *The House of God,* when each specialty -surgery, emergency medicine, or hospital internist- has a different way of approaching medicine, with sometimes opposite results. For instance, a surgeon may want to excise the appendix, while the emergency medicine physician might want to try antibiotics first, thus enrolling the patient in the CODA research project.[7] We must recognize the pressure of physicians to find a diagnosis, often in as little as fifteen minutes, since that is considered the ideal time they should spend with a patient to satisfy insurances and administrative expectations. However, from the moral point of view, this seems wrong. When there is significant medical uncertainty, it is in the interest of the patient to be informed of such uncertainty.

This problem of epistemic uncertainty in the correctness of a diagnosis or treatment plan is found in any patient-physician relationship. But it does seem to have unique implications for how to tailor the treatment of patients who hold different views about the meaning of health and disease. I argue that, in these cases, physicians should be even more open to patients' culture or point of view. One reason is that it will probably be more productive in helping the patient through their ailment, as it will demonstrate to the patient that the physician has their best interests in mind, as well as leading the physician to gain the patient's trust more rapidly. When there is no clear curative recommendation for a medical condition based on current medical knowledge, such as mental illnesses, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, or Huntington's, the patients should be the primary decision-maker about what type of medicine and which treatments they prefer. Western medicine is generally put on a pedestal of perfection; it cures all, diagnoses all, and treats all. This is understandable due to medical advancements like Germ Theory or the development and perfection of surgeries. However, it is important to recognize that western medicine is not faultless, especially in the realm of mental and degenerative diseases. Due to the fallibility of western medicine, I advocate for a deliberative model of physician-patient relationship. In this model, the physician is the "partner," discusses procedures and treatments, listens to patient preferences, and then helps the patient make reflective, informed decisions, overall acting as a counsel to the patient about their health.

A poignant example of the need to reform our medical approaches in a way that resembles the deliberative model is the case of patients with mental illnesses. Western medicine's "approach" to mental illness is based on Emmanuel's paternalistic model, consisting of the physician deciding what is best for the patient. In this model, the physician believes they know more about the ailment, and so medicates them with little evidence that it benefits the patient. Meanwhile, in Geel (Belgium), doctors observe and listen to their patients – the deliberative model of care- and incorporate the patients into society, leading to a higher success rate of patients thriving while dealing with their mental illness.[8] Therefore, trusting the patient to decide what they wish to do with their life achieves a higher level of autonomy and healthcare of the patient. Therefore, Western medicine is

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[7] Davidson, Giana H, David R Flum, David A Talan, Larry G Kessler, Danielle C Lavallee, Bonnie J Bizzell, Farhood Farjah, et al. 2017. "Comparison of Outcomes of Antibiotic Drugs and Appendectomy (CODA) Trial: A Protocol for the Pragmatic Randomised Study of Appendicitis Treatment." *BMJ Open* 7 (11)

[8] Miller, Lulu; Spiegel, Alix. n.d. "The Problem with the Solution : Invisibilia : NPR."

not in a position to make judgments regarding the quality and direction of treatment in these "epistemic" conditions. The principle of autonomy should typically be respected in cases of medical uncertainty about care (mental illnesses and terminal diseases), where healthcare providers should listen to the patient's directives.

It is worth noting, however, that patients should not be licensed to do anything to their body with the assistance of their physician. An example of this would be when certain cultural health-promoting practices do not, in fact, promote health, but instead lead to harm. Lead, for instance, is a key ingredient in the remedy "Daw Tway," which is used to help children with digestive issues.[9] Giving lead would be considered harm, thus according to the do-no-harm principle, these cases should be addressed and halted by the physician. This would require, and morally justify, the physician-patient relationship to reverting to a paternalistic model. Permitting this toxic treatment would go against the non-maleficence principle and would therefore be morally impermissible for the physician to administer. Physicians have the moral obligation to inform the patient and communicate this decision to them using terms they understand. In other words, a physician should explain in terms relatively accessible to the patient, being respectful towards the culture (no condescending or paternalistic tone or references) and using the terminology the patient did. Another situation where the deliberative model is ill-advised is in an emergency, such as an unconscious patient, where time and level of consciousness are obstacles. Here, the paternalistic relationship is the only ethically responsible model.

Another important responsibility of the physician is to obtain informed consent. This can be very trying when doctors from foreign cultures are involved in the process of informing the patient about their diagnosis, offering treatment options, and explaining them. If there is a language barrier, an interpreter should be present, or accessible through a phone call. This protects the patient by helping the provider to not miss pertinent information or by preventing a complicated situation from arising. By bridging the communication gap, doctors can have a fruitful discussion about the patient's beliefs and values, focusing on the medically relevant ones.[10] As Kleiman states in 1980, "Patients should solicit the patient's or the family's perspectives of the disease (the bodily discomforts), the illness (their experience of the bodily discomforts), and their explanatory models (ideas about cause, timing, and mode of onset of symptoms, patho-physiological processes, severity of illness, and appropriate treatments)."[11] Then the physician can discuss medical topics and norms, such as how to handle a hypothetical terminal diagnosis, to understand the patient's wishes and values. These could be in line with a specific culture, or not. As in Lia Lee's case, her parents misinterpreted the concept of her prognosis, which was her death in a matter of days, as doctors declaring they were going to kill Lia.[12] Therefore, these questions protect the patient from potential misdiagnosis, mistreatment, or miscommunication. They also make sure that the patient understands what their disease is, thus avoiding treatment conflicts between their culture and the doctor's advice. Furthermore, it also protects the physician from misdiagnosing because of faulty medical history and

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[9] "Arsenic and Lead Poisoning." 2017. Accessed December 30.

[10] Culhane-Pera, Kathleen A., Vawter, Dorothy E., Xiong, Phua. 2003. *Healing by Heart*. Vol. 86.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Anne Fadiman. 2012. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures.*

other frustrations they may encounter.

To illustrate this, we will review a clinical case about a woman from India called Mrs. Ramsarathan.[13] She complained of abdominal pain and was treated by Dr. Ellamjeet. After testing and discovering that the patient had cancer, Dr. Ellamjeet, who had been treating her, and assumed he knew her culture, discussed her diagnosis with her family first, to determine whether to disclose this information to Mrs. Ramsarathan. Dr. Ellamjeet, per another physician's advice, consulted the ethics committee of the hospital, and still decided not to disclose the information. Had he known Mrs Ramsarathan's wishes from the beginning instead of discussing her care with her family first, as well as her diagnosis and other information regarding her health and care, it would have made for a smoother case. Furthermore, had Dr. Ellamjeet taken the time to discuss with Mrs. Ramsarathan the possibility of a terminal or life-threatening disease and communicated with her to determine what she wished to know or delegate to her family, he might have avoided the complicated ethical issues that came later. This 'putting the patient first' approach is in line with the deliberative model of physician-patient relationship, as elaborated by Ezekiel and Linda Emmanuel.[14] Additionally, it exemplifies a model that respects patient autonomy and their individual values without the threat of stereotyping. This helps avoid the dangers of poor communication with foreign cultures.

In conclusion, following the principles of autonomy, beneficence, and non-maleficence, healthcare professionals should respect their patient's culture. This would foster trust between the patient and the provider in a shorter time frame, likely leading the doctor to come to the correct diagnosis faster, thus honoring better informed consent and patient autonomy.[15] By following the protocol of first discussing with the patient their values, following the deliberative model, the physician would make sure that patients exercise their autonomy. Afterwards, the doctor might face fewer ethical issues with patient care. There are cases where patients' safety is crucial, so in certain cases medical professionals should adopt a paternalistic relationship. If the physician believes that the alternative treatment provided by the culture would be more harmful than not following it, then they should discuss this with the patient, to minimize emotional distress, and possibly with a board of physicians. Doctors must be careful not to be culturally imperialistic and not stereotype the patient, which is why it is crucial for the doctor to deliberate with patients on their values relative to their healthcare, as direct autonomy is not always praised in other cultures. The focus of this paper is centered on the culture clash that emerges from definition differences, informed consent, and delegating healthcare choices to family-members. The content of this paper focuses on the American culture bias; it would be interesting to see if other medical cultures have the same issues that are present in American hospitals.

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[13] Perkins, and Henry S. 2006. "Ethics Expertise and Cultural Competence." *Virtual Mentor* 8 (2).

[14] Emanuel, Ezekiel J., and Linda L. Emanuel. 1992. "Four Models of the Physician-Patient Relationship." *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association* 267 (16). American Medical Association: 2221.

[15] Kuczewski, Mark, and Patrick J Mccruden. 2018. "Informed Consent: Does It Take a Village? The Problem of Culture and Truth Telling."

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A New Necessity for Consequentialism and A New Consequentialism for Necessity[1]

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Abstract: Consequentialism is often repudiated as a backwards approach to moral theory, and the term 'Machiavellian' carries a derogatory weight. Moreover, many people believe that politics and morality do not mix, citing Machiavelli as evidence. But what if the only way to be moral in necessary human activities, such as politics, is to be 'Machiavellian?' In this, essay I make the case that morality and politics are inextricable. I uncover a dynamic of interconnected functions, which introduces a Machiavellian form of consequentialism that I seek to prove is the only moral theory employable in necessary human affairs. I explore necessity and its relationship to morality, and I argue that ends *necessarily* render means moral, and that acting on necessitation determines the morality (or immorality) of an action. I posit that necessity in the dynamic of affairs such as politics is a natural law. I implore people to realize and actuate the natural law of necessary consequentialism so that a functional and moral world is effectuated. This is Machiavellianism. If this argument is correct, then we shall see Machiavelli's reputation is mistaken, and in so doing, appreciate the moral theory that stems from Machiavelli's framework.

A common sense but rather misleading popular belief is that politics and morality are mutually exclusive. Likewise, Machiavelli is popularly seen as a proponent of an unethical political view. Indeed, the word 'Machiavellian' is often used as a synonym for 'immoral.' What these popular beliefs fail to consider is that because politics is a natural and necessary human activity, it cannot be circumvented or eschewed; thus, politics must have an inherent moral aspect.[2] This position does not mean that all engagement in such activities are intrinsically moral. Rather, because such activities are necessary for our existence, they possess the capacity for being practiced morally and immorally. In properly understanding the complex world of politics and morality through this lens, the gap between the political and the moral disappears. Moreover, I argue, if we understand Machiavelli correctly, the political is the moral.

In this essay, I seek to explain how the inherent capacity for morality in natural human activities exists and address the moral theory that underlies Machiavelli. I will explicate the Machiavellian consequentialist formula for acting morally when engaging in such activities, but first I must address the incompleteness of consequentialism and explore the Machiavellian worldview of Natural and Necessary Human Activities[3] and the dynamic

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[1] This essay would not be in the shape that it is in without the generous Dr. Douglass Reed! Thank you so much for your help, Professor!

[2] I make the assumption that politics is a natural, and necessary human activity.

[3] A characteristic of Natural and Necessary Human Activities is that they are necessarily strived for as ends, which is maximum functionality of the activity.

that arises from them.

"As I have said, he should do what is right if he can; but he must be prepared to do wrong if necessary" (Machiavelli 2000, 577). This quote from *The Prince* is the smoking gun for the usual interpretation that Machiavelli is immoral, yet it will serve as the foundation for my argument and what I consider Machiavellian Conduct.[4] This is because though Machiavelli uses the word 'wrong' to signify immoral behavior, he is referring to conventional immorality: what society considers immoral, rather than what *is* moral. 'Wrong' for Machiavelli does not mean objectively wrong, all things considered. I am attempting to provide a framework in which Machiavelli's moral theory is coherent and insightful. In doing so, I present a new moral theory.[5]

As we will see, Machiavelli's consequentialism is inextricable from the intention that produces the desired result. Futhermore, we will find that Machiavellian Conduct is the only effective way for the realism of Natural and Necessary Human Activities to be engaged with morally. I argue that the true Machiavellian is competent and thus moral, and must continue to employ this form of morality or become incompetent and thus immoral. Moreover, I shall show that Machiavelli realized that there is a particular consequentialism that bridges the perceived gap between politics and morality.

The Primary Question of Consequentialism

The motto of primary consequentialism is "the ends justify the means." Few people regard this doctrine as truly providing a system or theory of ethics, since it is a repudiation of Conventional Morality and has other drawbacks. In consequentialism, the morality of the initial action is dependent upon the intended consequence being fulfilled. Thus, if the intended consequence is not fulfilled, the initial act may be judged unnecessary[6] and unjustified. This holds true even when there is no intention to produce a positive or negative outcome, as consequentialism judges all outcomes regardless of intention. This often causes reluctance to engage in the initial act since the consequence is never guaranteed and thus the agent might be deemed immoral. Examples of Conventional Morality are refraining from killing, lying, stealing, deceiving, violence (unless in self-defense), repression, inciting fear, coercion, torturing/cruelty, etc., since these actions intentionally cause harm. Further, the fact that the consequences of such actions might be good is not enough to consider the actions moral. Most people regard the above actions as immoral, so they are considered Conventionally Immoral.[7] Consequentialism, therefore, is not "conventional," since it permits these acts so long as they result in net gain, or the consequence is

[4] Machiavellian Conduct is acting conventionally moral when conventional immorality is not necessitated. Machiavellian Conduct is acting according to his quote.

[5] To be clear, this essay is not interpretive. Rather, it is the beginning to a rational reconstruction of Machiavellian moral theory. That is, I am not here presenting Machiavelli's ethics, but perhaps a Machiavellian theory of ethics.

[6] Unnecessary = something that is not demanded or required by a situation.

[7] Conventional Immorality is only a function when it is necessitated.

"good." I divide all possible moral actions into two categories,[8] Conventional Morality and Conventional Immorality.

Proponents of consequentialism are often asked, "at what point do the ends no longer justify the means?" This is the primary question of consequentialism. It is significant because if the ends justify the means, then theoretically anything—even a Conventionally Immoral act—is permissible as long as it brings about good consequences or net benefits. For instance, one purpose of torture might be to elicit information from the tortured. Imagine a situation in which people are using torture to find and eliminate a ruthless dictator. The information presumed to be obtained from the tortured will help the torturers find the dictator and free the people from his subjugation and oppression. The use of torture is the means, which is justified if the ends are reached, and unjustified if not; however, torture never ceases to be Conventionally Immoral.

The nature of consequentialism is that the ends must be anticipated to justify the means. Thus, the primary question of consequentialism returns, for if something *is not absolutely certain or necessary* for the continuation of an Existential Necessity,[9] say, for instance, the thriving of a community,[10] then the means taken to reach an end remain immoral, since the situation didn't necessitate[11] the means. Conventional Morality is typically a good moral theory because it refrains from causing harm. Undergoing harm is the opposite of what an Existential Necessity desires by virtue of it existing as a functional entity. Conventional Morality is typically good in itself, and as a means to ends.

Is it not amoral when someone proceeds to engage in speculative and hopeful means after acknowledging the possibility (maybe even probability) that the means would not be justified by Conventionally Immoral actions? This is engagement in primary consequentialism. Certainly it is difficult to predict outcomes with one hundred percent accuracy. Even if the ends are certain to occur as a result of the means, what it took to get there in the example of torture remains Conventionally Immoral and may not have been necessary, meaning that the ends cannot fully justify the means. The dictator may have been located by another means, for instance using advanced technology, which would not cause much suffering but still result in locating the target. Since Conventional Morality is moral until otherwise necessitated, any Conventionally Immoral means that don't ensure the ends can never be rendered completely moral. I assert that Conventionally Immoral means are only ever justified if they are necessitated because if they are not required, Con-

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[8] This division of possible moral actions signifies that at all times in Natural and Necessary Human Activities, one of the two can be employed and be rendered moral, or immoral depending on its necessitation and thus outcome.

[9] An Existential Necessity is anything that is necessary for the functioning of something that is necessary to be fulfilled for an entity in a dynamic, whatever that entity is. Fulfilling the needs of an Existential Necessity is moral so long as the entity is a necessity for itself and a necessary function for other Natural and Necessary Human Activities.

[10] A community is an Existential Necessity, not only because it is a natural human activity, but because the community's functioning is desired by all of its members, making it existentially necessary to exist and fulfill its needs.

[11] Necessitate* requires a moral action of some kind, be it Conventionally Moral or Conventionally Immoral. In Natural and Necessary Human Activities, some kind of action is always necessitated.

ventional Morality should have been used. Only if a situation necessitates[12] a Conventionally Immoral action will it make that action inextricable from the necessary consequence. Then, the situation transforms into a frame of good ethics, whereupon Conventional Immorality becomes moral.

The Dynamic of Morality in Natural and Necessary Human Activities

I am proposing that there are two features of an action required for it to be moral, even if it is Conventionally Immoral. First, the action is required for the continuation or improvement of some necessary condition or function of a necessity.[13] For example, a stable economy is necessary as an end and a means for another necessary function, such as a state. Second, the agent knows that a situation requires a specific action, and knows which action(s) is required. This will ensure that sufficient and not excessive Conventional Immorality is used, and render all actions fundamentally moral. This is because what makes life worth living is fundamentally good[14] and what makes life worth living must be functional for it to be fulfilled. This fulfillment can only occur when there is an inextricable relationship between the ends and means.

In a situation where Conventional Immorality is required, not engaging in Conventional Immorality will result in a dysfunctional necessary function.[15] One attribute of a functioning community is a functioning economy, which is itself a function, and therefore also an end. Since this end also leads to other functions of an Existential Necessity, such as technology, security, happiness etc., a functioning economy is simultaneously also a means. Therefore, a sustained economy and the actions taken to sustain it are each functions and necessities of an Existential Necessity. Without the means that continue the functioning of the necessity, there would be no end for which something in existence can live and thrive. Upon the fulfillment of an end in a dynamic, more functions are enabled for fulfillment, whereby the ends become means.

The community is a necessary function itself,[16] an ultimate end,[17] and an Existential Necessity, which becomes fully functional when all other necessary functions that enable it to function are functioning. So, when a function of a community is not fulfilled or is violated, for instance when people starve even amidst an abundance of food, the community

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[12] A necessitated situation requires a specific action because that action is inextricable from its results which are necessary, otherwise, the action wouldn't be necessitated.

[13] A function of a necessity is anything that enables the necessity to exist, and/or thrive, whatever that necessity is.

[14] Existential necessities and are good in themselves, thus their functionality is good.

[15] A necessary function of something can thus be anything that enables a necessity (which can also be a function) to function, or is a process of its functioning. This function is necessary to continue to function as an Existential Necessity, and thus all necessary functions are existentially necessary because they are functions of ultimate ends.

[16] The community is a function of itself, and for everyone who seeks benefit from living in the community.

[17] An entity that is the starting point of all other necessary functions that come back to sustain and better the entity. An existentially necessary entity whereupon functioning is the purpose of its own existence.

falls into partial dysfunction. Dysfunction signifies that immorality is occurring.[18] This is the case for a few reasons. Food provides sustenance and is necessary for the functioning[19] of a community, because not only does it enable subsistence (an end to many means), but it enables higher levels of functioning (a means to many ends). People live in a community to subsist and flourish, so when the central reasons for their communalism are neither fulfilled nor working towards fulfillment, the community is immediately rendered dysfunctional. So long as the function/necessity is fulfilled, whatever attributes the intention carries (greed, altruism) when executing a necessitated act does not matter. So long as the intention to execute an action is necessitated, it is also moral by virtue of the situation.

There is a myriad of functions that constitute a fully functioning Existential Necessity. A state and its government are inextricable from the people who live in the state.[20] They each exist for each other; therefore, the functions of one become interrelated with the functions of the other. Thus a dynamic[21] of ends to means relationships exists. A dynamic necessitates total functionality, as it only arises by virtue of an Existential Necessity. Because dysfunction occurs when something Conventionally Immoral is committed unnecessarily, for instance, when corrupt politicians steal what is rightly the state's money, something must be done to reinstate functionality to the now dysfunctional dynamic. The people are angry, meaning other functions (happiness, trust, community, citizenry, etc.) have fallen into dysfunction. Their economy is spiraling downward, they distrust government, and therefore the functionality of the dynamic is in disarray. Whatever must be done to solve this *must* be done.

Imagine that the corrupt politicians are apprehended. Some willingly return the stolen money, but the majority do not. The stolen money is a substantial portion of the state's total budget, continuing and exacerbating the dysfunction everywhere. The citizens, still subscribing to Conventional Morality, demand that the corrupt politicians return the money, but will neither understand nor accept a Conventionally Immoral method for obtaining it. The remaining corrupt politicians will succeed in keeping their stolen money unless their bank account numbers are somehow obtained. After repeated failures from Machiavellian politicians to open their accounts, an excruciatingly painful, carcinogenic, illegal, unconstitutional but impeccably effective truth serum is used. The necessary information is obtained and the stolen money is recovered.

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[18] Remember that Conventional Morality must be employed unless Conventional Immorality is necessitated. This is because unnecessary Conventional Immorality renders something dysfunctional because what's necessary for a function of an Existential Necessity is Conventionally Moral. Conventional Morality is moral unless otherwise necessitated. That which makes for functionality is moral.

[19] Being necessary for something's functioning indicates an ends-means dynamic relationship between the function or multiplicity of functions and what's necessary for them to be achieved.

[20] I make the assumption that a state is necessary for the functioning of a community, human prosperity, and continuation of each. This assumption is predicated on acknowledging citizen's desires to reach their own ultimate ends. While anarchy might be possible, it isn't a reality for those living in a state.

[21] Dynamic is the entire multitude of interconnected functions that exist by virtue of an Existential Necessity. Dynamic is also the relationship between connected functions. Dynamic relationships aren't just back and forth between two functions, a functions' means and ends are also means other functions in the dynamic.

The politicians who administered the truth serum announce that they have recovered the stolen money but lie about the method by which it was obtained, telling everyone that the money was retrieved through legal and Conventionally Moral means. Because a necessary function of the functioning economy was reinstated, the citizens rejoice. Other functions, such as happiness, trust in government, etc., also become functional as a result of the recovery, thus returning the once dysfunctional functions to a state of proper functionality. According to the citizens, the politicians acted morally and responded to their indignation and needs. To return to original functionality, however, the Machiavellian politicians were required to deceive the citizens—another Conventionally Immoral practice. Because the people were unaccepting of Conventional Immorality when the stolen money situation necessitated its use, deception was rendered moral and obligatory.

Deception brought the dynamic back to functionality as the money was returned and economic functioning was restored. Telling the truth would not have changed the outcome of the restored economy, but it would sustain, exacerbate, and likely cause other dysfunctions. Deception also rendered the dynamic flourishing since the citizens commend and trust the Machiavellian politicians - after all, they did their job both in the eyes of the citizens, and in the nature of the situation. This was only the case *because* the politicians used Conventionally Immoral methods, and this was only moral because the methods were necessitated. Conventionally Immoral acts always remain Conventionally Immoral but are rendered moral in these situations. "As I have said, he should do what is right if he can; but he must be prepared to do wrong if necessary" (Machiavelli 2000, 577).

If such actions were not necessitated, they would have been immoral on all sides (just like stealing the money), and would therefore result in the dysfunctionality of the dynamic. If someone were to use truth serum to obtain the stolen money, but instead of returning it, pocket it just as the original thieves did, and proceed to deceive the citizens, that person would be acting completely immorally. This is because dysfunctionality would be perpetuated, as there was no need for him to pocket the money, nor lie to citizens. The situation demanded Machiavelli's consequentialism from him, however, he did not execute what was necessitated and did the opposite: committed Conventional Immorality unnecessarily.

A New Morality

I call my Machiavellian variation of consequentialism 'Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism'.[22] Consequentialism becomes Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism when a dynamic exists within Natural and Necessary Human Activities whereby any means to continue functional necessary ends become moral. This is the criteria for Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism:

[22] Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism is the entire system of morality that exists in situations that necessitate consequentialism. Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism is also the employment of consequentialism in a dynamic state (non political state) of necessity. Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism is also acting Conventionally Moral when Conventional Immorality is not necessitated, as the dynamic necessitates Conventional Morality unless Conventional Immorality is necessitated. A moral person must realize Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism and employ it. Machiavellian Conduct is practiced when this happens.

1. The means are certain to produce the intended outcome, which dynamic relationships enable and ensure.

2. A situation necessitates a means, which if not enacted would result in the dysfunctionality of a necessity. Conventional Morality are the standard means unless a situation necessitates otherwise.

3. The outcome is sustaining and continuing [a] necessary function(s) or thing(s) (the end or means since both are ends and means to other functions).

Thus, no matter how Conventionally Immoral the means are, they are moral because without them there would be no way of even being Conventionally Moral (a function itself) because morality wouldn't exist without life, and thus the good exists from having a starting point. What brings us to good is necessary and thus moral. A means to ends dynamic system is predicated on necessity, and vice versa, which is why necessity is the attribute that makes an action moral so long as what is being engaged in is an Existential Necessity. In cases of Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism, the Conventionally Immoral act to achieve a necessary functions' functioning must be the least Conventionally Immoral action of all effective alternatives, otherwise true Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism is not employed.[23]

The axiom for Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism, is "the ends must *necessarily* render the means moral" and "for something necessary for existence there is a goodness embedded in its very functioning." Thus, we are now in position to answer to the question of consequentialism. The answer is "so long as the means are necessary, they are moral. So long as they are not necessary, they are immoral." This is because any objectively necessitated act (not just perceived to be necessitated) becomes moral when executed. The normative property still judges the outcome of the action regardless of Conventional Morality or Conventional Immorality, and thus this form of ethics remains within the doctrine of consequentialism.

The ends necessarily render the means moral, *because* the means enable moral ends and both are necessary for a necessity (whatever the necessity is) which is always moral to fulfill. In political realism or any Existential Necessity, or dynamic stemming from an Natural and Necessary Human Activities, the actions taken to reach the functioning of a necessary function is synonymous with morality. It is Existentially Necessary for the necessary functions of an ultimate end to be fulfilled. The necessity is now both the ends and the means for the ultimate ends.[24] The necessity's ends and means fulfill the functioning of the ultimate ends, which come back to enable the necessary functions of the Existential Necessity's means and ends.

Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism is a natural law of functionality, and exists when Natural and Necessary Human Activities are in play. This theory means that a truly moral person, especially rulers, must realize the world of Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism and conduct their actions according to its law. A truly moral person has renounced acting upon the misleading theories of complete Conventional Morality and

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[23] This is because Conventional Morality is moral unless otherwise necessitated, so if a 'less Conventionally Immoral' alternative to a necessary end exists, it must be employed. This 'less Conventionally Immoral' alternative is the truly required act.

[24] Ultimate ends = An Existential Necessity in which total functionality fulfills the purpose of its existence.

non-Machiavellian (primary) consequentialism that blind him/her to moral law. The discoverer who activates their morality so that their thoughts and actions are in accord with the law operates skillfully within the dynamic of Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism. We call this person 'Machiavellian'.

Conclusion

While Machiavelli did not write *The Prince* to focus on morality's entwinement with politics and all other Natural and Necessary Human Activities, his fundamental insight into the nature of human activities is correct. The excerpt from *The Prince* perfectly captures my use of the terms Conventional Immorality and Conventional Morality and the necessity and therefore morality of acting Conventionally Immoral when necessary. After all, Machiavelli was focused on securing the statesman's power and position, but he realized that the only way to do this was to create a truly functioning state system. Machiavelli unknowingly discovered that competency is morality when engaging in Natural and Necessary Human Activities, and that acting immorally means doing something unnecessary. Regardless of whether Machiavelli's prescription is used to further a position of power or act with the best interest of the people in mind, its true application results in the functioning of an Existential Necessity, which is necessary to fulfill. This is how and why Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism in Natural and Necessary Human Activities is obligatory to employ, and why consequentialism can only be a true ethical system in a necessary-dynamic relationship of such kind. In fact, it is the *only* true ethical system in this relationship.

I stand by the maxim that to render something completely moral is better than to merely render something acceptable, and Machiavellian Conduct does just that to consequentialism. I argue that primary consequentialism at its best only delivers permission to Conventionally Immoral acts, but that Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism delivers morality to Conventional Immorality. I argue that Machiavelli (unknowingly) discovered a system for which consequentialism becomes mandatory for a moral person, and not acting "Machiavellian" renders engagement in Natural and Necessary Human Activities immoral.

Normatively speaking, every person involved in the dynamic world of Natural and Necessary Human Activities and Existential Necessities must act with the realist knowledge of Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism and Machiavellianism. If they do not, they become immoral and incompetent. Anyone can use regular consequentialism to think themselves into justification, but it takes perspicacity[25] to know when and how to employ Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism – true consequentialism. Whether a person strives to either be moral or competent, (s)he must employ Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism, for it delivers both as they are synonymous in the world of Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism. Machiavellianism is morality.

[25] This theory relies on the human ability to realize Necessary-Dynamic-Consequentialism and conduct themselves in a completely Machiavellian manner, with perspicacity, and rationality, and therefore the skills and moral character to act this way.

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