

LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE: AN INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY AND THE GREAT PHILOSOPHERS



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THE NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY



Rodin's "The Thinker"

Major Themes:

- Metaphysics: Study of the nature of reality
- Logic: Study of validity in argument
- Epistemology: Study of how we come to know
- Aesthetics: Study of art and beauty
- Politics: Study of political rights, government and the role of citizens
- Ethics: Study of morality and how one should live the good life

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HERMAGORAS OF TEMNOS



Stasis Theory

- Fact (Did a thing happen?)
- Definition (What kind of a thing was it?)
- Value (Is the thing good or bad, worthy or unworthy?)
- Policy (What should be done about the thing?)

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VALUES IN LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE

How does a value-focused debate work?

Every value resolution contains one or more objects of evaluation and an evaluative term.

"Resolved: Liberty is more precious than law."

The objects of evaluation are "liberty" and "law" – the evaluative term is "more precious."

But how do we decide what is "more precious?" This requires the injection of a value such as justice, safety, peace, progress, the common good, or something else.

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UIL FALL TOPIC -- RESOLVED: AMATEUR STATUS OUGHT TO BE VALUED ABOVE COMMODIFICATION OF NAME IMAGE LIKENESS.

This resolution does not specify a value, leaving that issue up to debaters to determine. The possibilities?

Likely Affirmative Positions:

Justice as Fairness (competitive balance)

Aristotelian concept of "Virtue Ethics" . . . The development of character

Communitarianism: The importance of youth sports to community

Likely Negative Positions:

Kant's Categorical Imperative: Never treat people merely as a means to an end

Right to Self (a subset of individualism and right to property)

Freedom of Speech (includes freedom of commercial speech)

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VALUES IN LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE



But sometimes, the resolution itself establishes the value that must be applied.

Resolved: A just social order ought to place the principle of equality above that of liberty.

This resolution establishes "justice" as the standard for evaluation.

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VALUES IN LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE



What is the Core Value?

What is the criterion for the value?

How is the criterion met (or not met) by the resolution?

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MAJOR VALUE CONTROVERSIES



Justice: Deontology vs. Utilitarianism

Sovereignty vs. Democracy

Individual Liberty vs. The Common Good

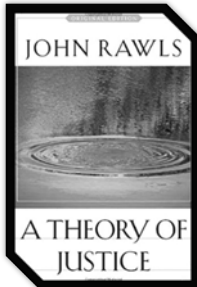
Capitalism vs. Socialism

Free Speech vs. Safety

Anthropocentrism vs. Biocentrism

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RULES OR CONSEQUENCES?



❖ Should we have ethical rules? (Kantian tradition)

❖ John Rawls: A Theory of Justice

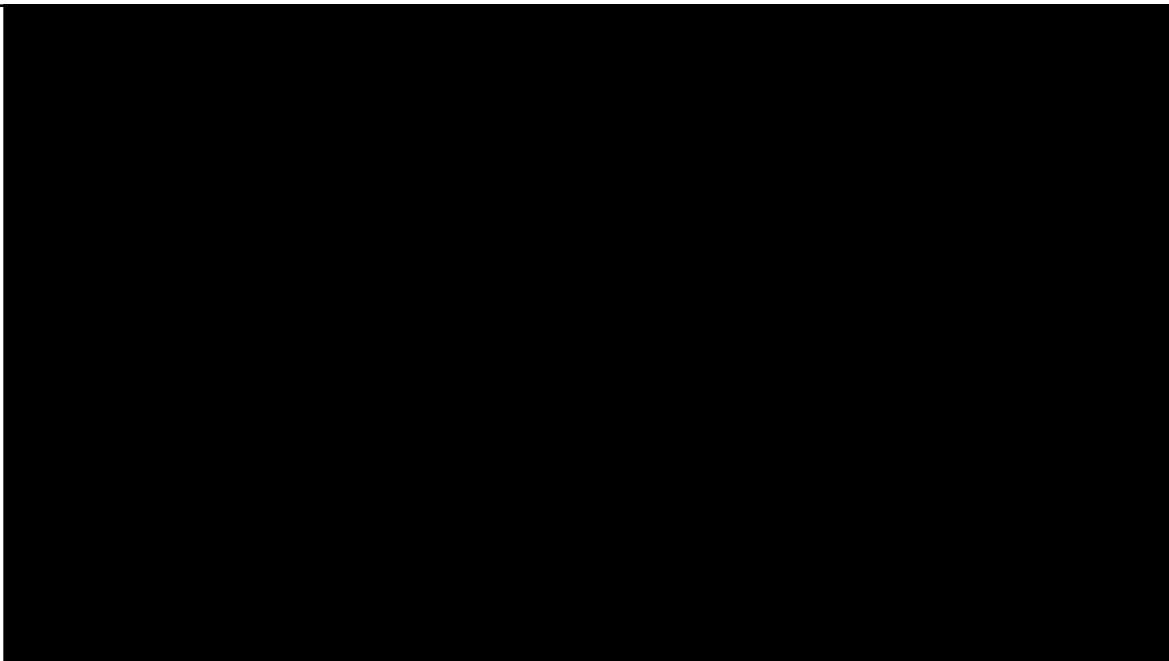


❖ Should we wait for a given situation & evaluate consequences? (Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill tradition)

❖ Joseph Fletcher's *Situation Ethics*



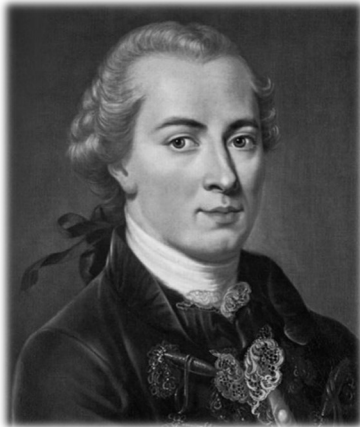
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IMMANUEL KANT (1724-1804)



Metaphysics of Morals (1797)

The Categorical Imperatives: Principles that are intrinsically valid; they are good in and of themselves; they must be obeyed in all situations and circumstances, if our behavior is to observe the moral law.

"Let justice be done, though the world perish"

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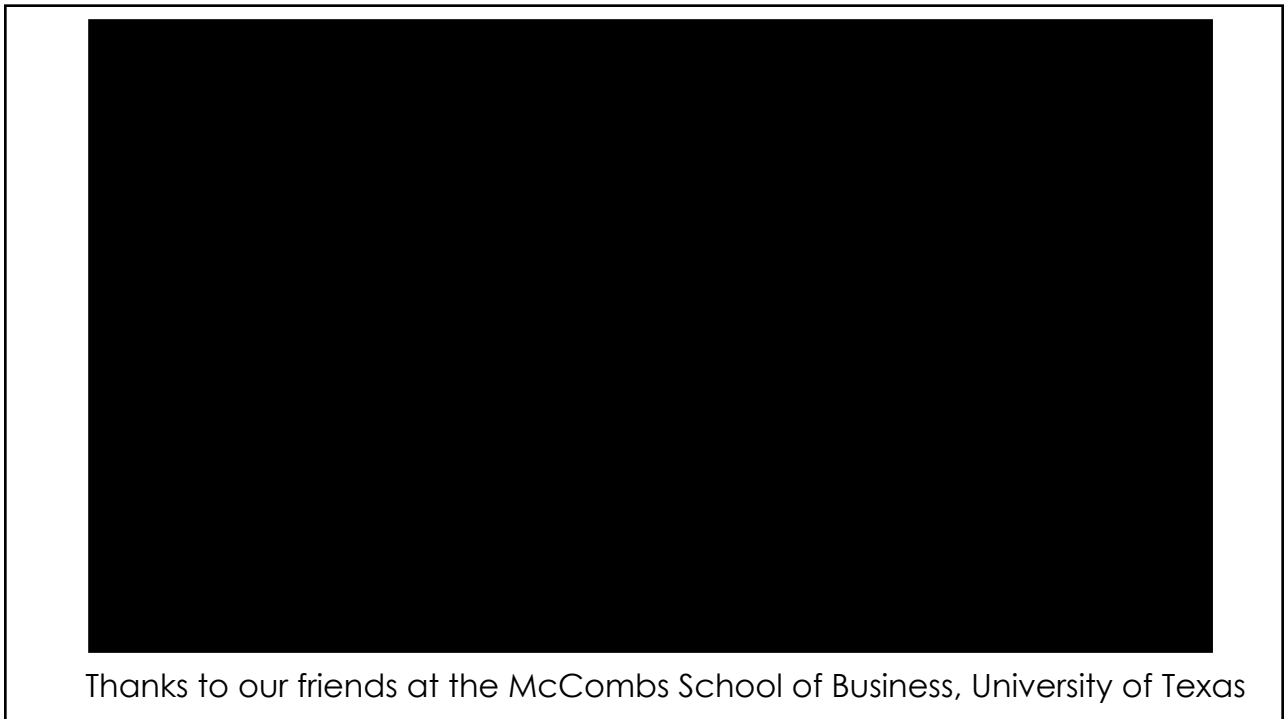
"DO THE NEXT RIGHT THING" PHILOSOPHY FROM FROZEN II



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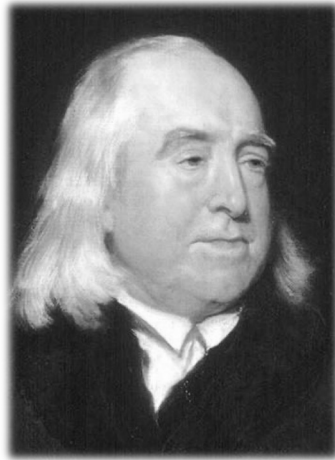
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JEREMY BENTHAM (1748-1832)



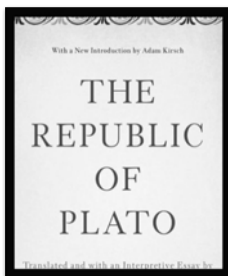
*Introduction to the Principles of
Morals and Legislation (1789)*

Utilitarianism: What makes an
act right is that it increases
pleasure and minimizes pain

Animals require equal
consideration with humans

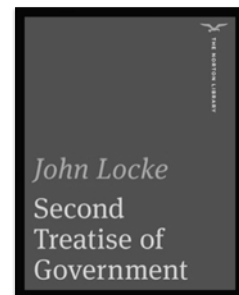
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SOVEREIGNTY OR DEMOCRACY?



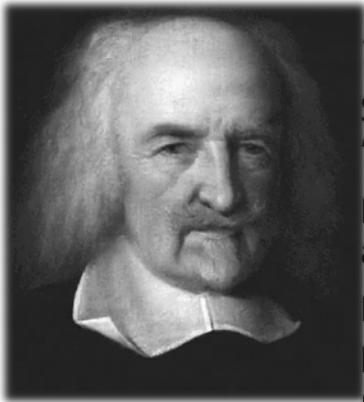
Plato: Democracy degenerates
into anarchy: Where freedom is
the supreme good anarchy
ultimately leads to slavery.

John Locke: People are equal
and invested with natural rights:
There are natural rights to life,
liberty, health, and property; The
will of the majority should prevail
(within limits).



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THOMAS HOBBS (1588–1679)



The Theory of Individual Rights: The Leviathan (1651)

Social contract theorist: In the state of nature, life is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short"

Everyone has their own conception of "the good" and this ultimately leads to war.

In order to leave the state of nature, we agree to give power to the Sovereign.

Monarchy is the superior form of government.

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DAVID HUME (1711–1776)



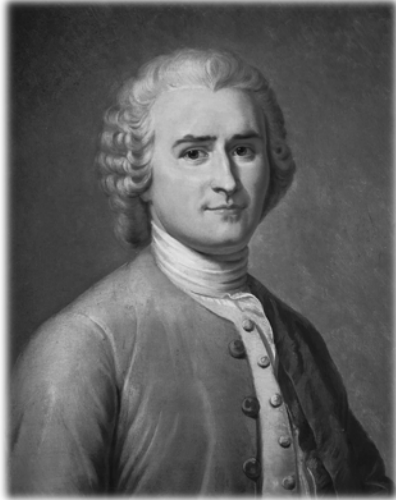
A Treatise of Human Nature (1739)

Opposes Social Contract Theory

Citizens have a "duty of obedience" -- a "benevolent despot" might produce better legislation than rule by an intolerant, bigoted, bloodthirsty mob.

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JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU (1712-1778)



The Social Contract (1762)

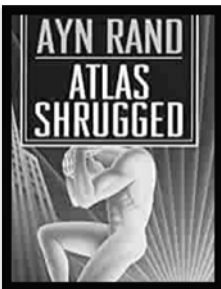
Key concepts:

"Man is born free, but is everywhere in chains."

In the social contract, there is no inherent conflict between freedom and authority. Instead, we exchange natural freedom for another kind of freedom – civil freedom.

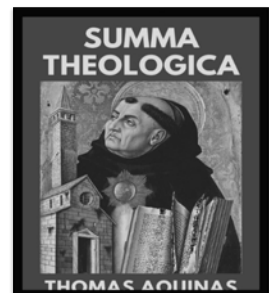
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INDIVIDUALISM VS. THE COMMON GOOD



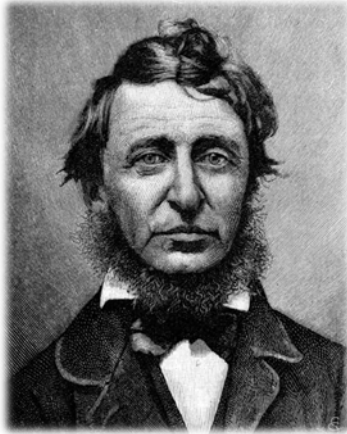
Rand: Morality is best achieved by pursuing rational self-interest. Societal progress happens as the result of individual effort.

Thomas Aquinas: The purpose of law is to provide for the common good of the community.



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HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817-1862)



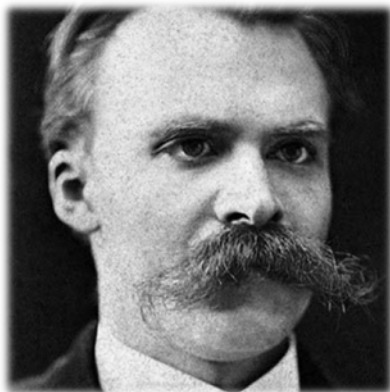
Civil Disobedience (1849)

Disobedience is appropriate when the state is unjust

There is an authority more important than obeying the law and the government - one's own conscience. The individual has the ultimate responsibility – it is the higher law.

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FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE 1844-1900)



Beyond Good and Evil (1886)

Morality is fiction

The human species would be healthier if all morality is abandoned.

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GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH HEGEL (1770-1831)



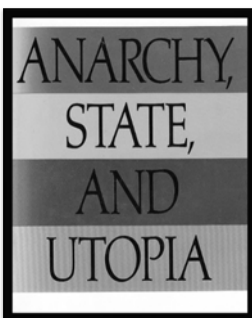
Phenomenology of Spirit (1807)

Individual freedom must be balanced by affirming the "ethical life" and "common bonds"

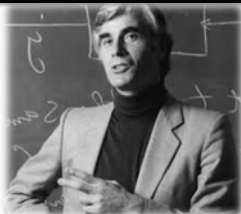
The state has the responsibility to care for the poor

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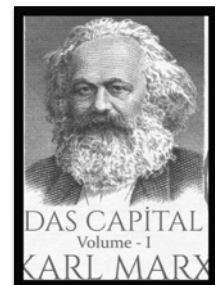
CAPITALISM VS. SOCIALISM



Robert Nozick: Advocates capitalism, which is described as "Rights-oriented libertarianism." Society functions best when people pursue their own best self-interest.

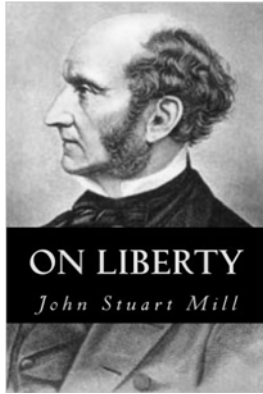


Karl Marx: An oppressed majority is exploited under the yoke of an oppressive minority. In capitalism, the industrial working class, or proletariat, engage in class struggle against the owners of the means of production, the bourgeoisie. This struggle will end in a revolution that restructures society.



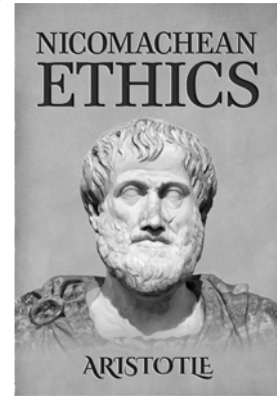
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FREE SPEECH VS. SAFETY



John Stuart Mill: Marketplace of Ideas: Since Mill rejected the notion of dogmatic certainty, a society should allow all ideas to be expressed. If a supposed dogma is correct, then it should be able to stand against all contrasting ideas. On the other hand, if it is in error, the marketplace of ideas will expose the error.

Aristotle: Virtue Ethics: moral **virtue** as a disposition to behave in the right manner and as a mean between extremes of deficiency and excess, which are vices at each extreme



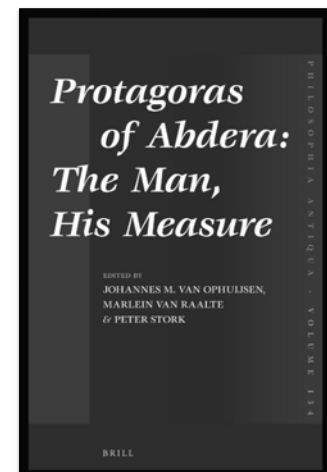
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BIOCENTRISM VS. ANTHROPOCENTRISM



Peter Singer: No reason to privilege humans over other animals, and therefore argues in favor of the equal consideration of interests of all sentient beings.

Protagoras of Abdera (485-415 BC): "Of all things the measure is Man, of the things that are, and of the things that are not."



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