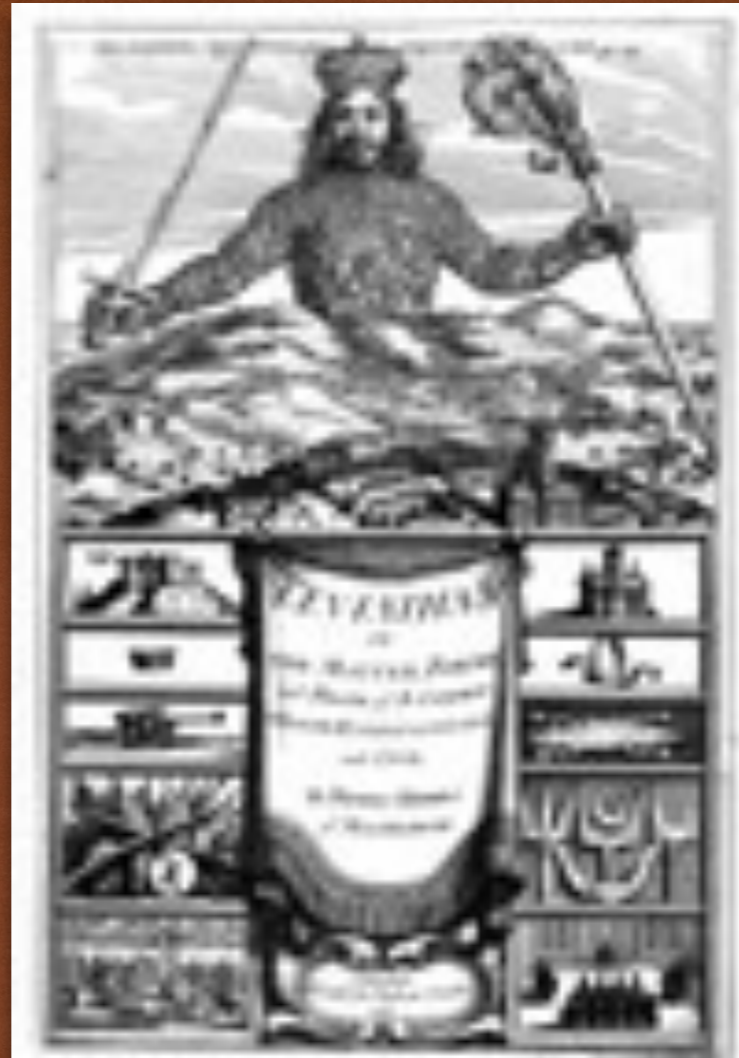


Jeremy Bentham



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

Pleasure And Pain (3:47) Ben Harper Welcome To The Cruel World

Chapter 1. OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

PARAGRAPH 1

- It is human nature to be motivated/directed in all, from right/wrong to cause/effect, by pain and pleasure, no matter what one says.
- This is the foundation for system of the principle of utility that aims at happiness via reason and law and improves moral science.
- The principle of utility is the (perhaps poor, as self-hindering/obscuring) abbreviation of the principle of the greatest happiness/felicity; for, the only universally desired, right, and proper goal for the actions of individuals and governments is the greatest happiness of all whose interest are involved.

Chapter 1. OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

PARAGRAPH 2

- A principle is the foundation/beginning of a series of mental operations, and is a sentiment/act of the mind about approving or disapproving of the utility of an action.
- The principle of utility regards how an action betters/worsens happiness of involved parties.

PARAGRAPH 3

- Utility is anything's ability to produce or not happiness/benefit, which is also to prevent or not pain in concerned parties, individuals or communities.

Chapter 1. OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

PARAGRAPH 4

- Communities are fictitious units whose members are individuals.
- A community's interests are the sum of those of its members.

PARAGRAPH 5

- To benefit an individual is to enlarge their overall pleasures/to diminish their overall pain.

Chapter 1. OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

PARAGRAPH 6

- The principle of utility is favourable to an action that augments overall the sum of the members' happinesses.

PARAGRAPH 7

- As it is only a type of action of an individual, a government's action follows the principle of utility when it enlarges the community's happiness.

Chapter 1. OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

PARAGRAPH 8

- Actions that follow the principle of utility may be said to follow the law of utility.
- A community's interests are the sum of those of its members.

PARAGRAPH 9

- An individual follows the principle of utility if she approves or disapproves of any action/thing via its effects upon the community's happiness; that is, following or breaking the law of utility.

Chapter 1. OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

PARAGRAPH 10

- An action that follows the law of utility is an action that ought to be done or at least is not one that ought not.
- An action that follows the law of utility is an action that is right to be done or at least is not one that is wrong to be done.
- An action that follows the law of utility is a right action or at least not a wrong one.
- ‘Ought’ and ‘right’ and ‘ought not’ and ‘wrong’ mean respectively ‘follows the principle of utility’ and ‘breaks the law of utility.’

Chapter 1. OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

PARAGRAPH 11

- To contest the PP of U is to misunderstand what one means.
- The PPU is unprovable and it is unnecessary to prove it, as it is used to prove all else and there is no infinite regress.

Chapter 1. OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

PARAGRAPH 12

- All humans usually use the PPU instinctually when judging their own and others' actions, if not also to guide their actions.
- Few completely adopt the PPU, due to either misunderstanding its application in all cases, or holding on to an unexamined or cherished prejudice/thought.
- In theory as in practice, humans can take the right or wrong track; in humans, consistency is the rarest trait.

Chapter 1. OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

PARAGRAPH 13

- One who fights the PPU, without knowing it, draws upon reasons that follow it.
- To see the greatest happiness principle as dangerous is to say it is not useful to use usefulness as a standard of evaluation and valuation. For it is only dangerous if the government actually aims at the happiness of one.
- Said arguments do not disprove the PPU, but prove that it is misapplied.
- (How to move the earth? = ‘How do you proceed to immediately change the planks of the vessel you’re currently sailing?’)

Chapter 1. OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

PARAGRAPH 14

- No arguments can disprove the rectitude of the PPU.
- Now/next see steps to understanding/adopting the PPU.

Chapter 4. VALUE OF A LOT OF PLEASURE OR PAIN, HOW TO BE MEASURED

PARAGRAPH 1

- Lawmakers make laws with the aim of attaining pleasures and avoiding pains.
- Their duty is thus to understand p/p's value.
- P/P are a legislator's instruments and their value is their strength.

PARAGRAPH 2

- Individuals value individual p/p following four elements or dimensions of their value: intensity, duration, (un)certainty, and (in)accessibility.

Chapter 4. VALUE OF A LOT OF PLEASURE OR PAIN, HOW TO BE MEASURED

PARAGRAPH 3

- Individuals consider p/p for value of an action following two additional ones: mitosis and purity.
- These are traits of the act/event that produces the p/p, not of the p/p; thus, they only count in said act/event's value, not the p/p's.

PARAGRAPH 4

- As affected members of the community, individuals consider p/p's value following an additional circumstance: extent.

Chapter 4. VALUE OF A LOT OF PLEASURE OR PAIN, HOW TO BE MEASURED

PARAGRAPH 5

- To evaluate the effects of an act on the community's interests, begin with a most immediately affected individual and consider for her the value of each pl. it immediately produces, of each pn. it immediately produces, of each subsequent pl. it produces, which is first pl.'s fecundity and first pn.'s impurity, and of each subsequent pn. it produces as the first pl.'s impurity and the first pn.'s fecundity.
- Then add up all the values of all the pl. as well as all of those of all the pn., and check their equation for the act's good or bad tendency overall in said individual's interests.
- Consider the number of concerned members and repeat with each.
- Add up the respective number of good and bad tendencies the act obtains from each member, and check their equation's outcome for the act's good or evil tendency regarding the members' community.

Chapter 4. VALUE OF A LOT OF PLEASURE OR PAIN, HOW TO BE MEASURED

PARAGRAPH 6

- It is unrealistic to proceed by said steps in every moral decision/evaluation or law making/applying; yet, they should always be taken in as close consideration as possible.
- The more closely the suggested process is followed, the more morally exact the actual process is.

PARAGRAPH 7

- These steps also apply to p/p in all their variations: good (which the cause or instrument of pl.)/evil, profit (which is distant pl.)/mischief, convenience/inconvenience, advantage/disadvantage, benefit/loss, happiness/unhappiness, etc.

Chapter 4. VALUE OF A LOT OF PLEASURE OR PAIN, HOW TO BE MEASURED

PARAGRAPH 8

- This theory is as useful as it is old and justified; for, it concerns humans who understand their own interest.
- For instance, land is valuable because it provides its owner a means to produce pl./avoid pn., and its value fluctuates with its possession's produced/avoided p/p's duration, (un)certainty, (in)accessibility, intensity, which depends on each individual's use of it, fecundity, and purity.
- Now/next see several particular kinds of p/p.

« *Intense, long, certain, speedy, fruitful, pure—*
Such marks in *pleasures* and in *pains* endure.
Such pleasures seek, if *private* be thy end:
If it be *public*, wide let them *extend*.
Such pains avoid, whichever be thy view:
If pains *must* come, let them *extend* to few. »

– Jeremy Bentham (circa 1789)