

Raymundo, Jino

ITETHIC

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Title: Chapter 1: Ethical Theories (Joel Feinberg: The Nature and Value of Rights)

Internet Reference:

<http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0534517242>

Learning Expectations:

To broaden my view on rights

To value more my rights

Quote:

"In our age of organized labor, even this picture is now archaic; for almost every kind of exchange of service is governed by hard bargained contracts so that even bonuses can sometimes be demanded as a matter of right, and nothing is given for nothing on either side of the bargaining table. And perhaps that is a good thing; for consider an anachronistic instance of the earlier kind of practice that survives, at least as a matter of form, in the quaint old practice of 'tipping'."

Book Review:

Rights play a significant role in the study of morality. What could be the rights that would encourage ourselves to do the right thing? And which rights would lead us to wrongdoings. That answer, of course, depends on one's perspective. It is a right of every child to have a proper education thus, enrolling someone who doesn't have the financial capacity to do so, will yield the right thing. If you choose to join in rallies and protests of militant groups, you are just practicing your right to freedom of expression. But it would not be morally right if you resort to violence. The effects depend on how we use our own rights. We are doing the morally right thing if don't abuse and misuse of our rights. Those rights are there for good reasons. I believe that the Philippine Constitution implements law that will benefit most of the population.

What I have learned:

I have given more importance to my rights as a human being and as a Filipino.

Integrity Questions:

1. What are your rights that apply to this reading?
2. Will you survive in Nowheresville?

Review Questions:

1. Describe Nowheresville. How is this world different from our world?

- According to Feinberg, Nowhereville is a place where no one has rights. The real world, our world, every one of us has rights.

2. Explain the doctrine of the logical correlativity of rights and duties. What is Feinberg's proposition to this doctrine?

- The doctrine states that, *"all duties entail other people's rights and all rights entail other people's duties"*. Feinberg proposed that *"...in the widespread but derivative, usage, 'duty' tends to be used for any action we feel we must do. It comes in short, to be a term of moral modality merely; and it is no wonder that the first thesis of the logical correlativity doctrine often fails."*

3. How does Feinberg explain the concept of personal desert? How would personal desert work in Nowheresville?

- Feinberg explained the concept of desert as, *"When a person is said to deserve something good from us what is meant in parts is that there would be certain propriety in our giving that good thing to him in virtue of the kind of person he is, perhaps, or more likely, in virtue of some specific thing he has done."* It is not existent in Nowheresville as Feinberg said.

4. Explain the notion of a sovereign right-monopoly. How would this work in Nowheresville according to Feinberg?

- Sovereign right-monopoly as said by Feinberg, *"The sovereign had a certain duty to treat his subjects well, but this duty was owed not to subjects directly, but to God, just as we might have a duty to the a person to treat his property well, but of course no duty to the property itself but only to its owner."*

5. What are claim-rights? Why does Feinberg think they are morally important?

- Feinberg wrote, *"Right is a kind of claim, and a claim is 'an assertion of right'".* It is morally important in the sense that, *"...There is no doubt that their characteristic [rights] use and that for which they are distinctively well suited, is to be claimed, demanded, affirmed, insisted upon. They are especially sturdy objects to 'stand upon,' a most useful sort of moral furniture. Having rights, of course, makes claiming possible; but it is claiming that gives rights their special moral significance."*

Discussion Questions:

1. Does Feinberg make a convincing case for the importance of rights? Why or why not?

- Yes, because he stated sound arguments about the importance of rights. s

2. Can you give a noncircular definition of claim-right?

- The capacity to hold authority over something.