

Week 5 Discussion: Kant's Ethics and Our Duty

Required Resources

Read/review the following resources for this activity:

- Textbook: Chapters 9, 10
- Lesson
- Minimum of 1 scholarly source (in addition to the textbook)

Introduction

Kant's famous First Formulation of the Categorical Imperative reads, "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law." Kant taught morality as a matter of following maxims of living that reflect absolute laws. "Universal" is a term that allows for no exceptions, and what is universal applies always and everywhere. Don't forget about the second formulation of the categorical imperative which states, "Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means." It is just as important.

Initial Post Instructions

For the initial post, address one of the following sets of questions:

1. What are the personal and/or communal ethical factors that may be involved in determining the moral position of either side given a contemporary debate, such as those concerning animal rights, stem cell research, abortion, the death penalty, and so forth?
2. Elaborate in detail the ethical positions arrived at by using the Kantian categorical imperative relative to the long standing debate surrounding the death penalty or abortion. Argue the ethics from the point of view of the prisoner or from the fetus
3. Evaluate the ethical positions in part two. You will want to detail whether they are convincing, logical, correct, consistent, etc.