

(this is last year's. Correct one is here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JGIwJnYIAAtMtIBu6RvPf0DdgdKfTlzfO3Bq9qy8wFk8/edit>)

CS 4863 Computers, Society, and Professionalism

Fall 2019

Section Discussion Guide

Week 3

I. Questions and news items

- Go around the room with questions/observations/relevant news items

II. Review: Kantianism

- What are the two formulations of the categorical imperative?
- Which do you think is more useful? Are they useful in different kinds of situations?
- How do you make a rule in Kant's theory?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of Kant's theories?

III. Review: Social Contract Theory

- How do you make a rule in social contract theory?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of social contract theory?
- What is the "veil of ignorance" and in what ways is this thought experiment helpful?
- Social contract theory goes beyond the question "Are my actions ethical?" to ask the broader questions "Is the world just?" and "What societal decisions can make the world more just?" Can you apply this framing to current political movements in the US and the world?

IV. Discussion: the mailing list

- You've been offered a lucrative consulting job writing membership management software for a non-profit organization you passionately disagree with
 - Do you take the job?
 - What more do you want to know about the situation in order to make a decision?
 - Does it matter if your code is the same as anyone else's, or if you can write something more effective than other people's code?
 - In what ways do those factors shape your decision?
 - What do the ethical theories we've studied so far say about this dilemma?
 - Discuss each theory in turn
- Now suppose you run a company that sells software online to whoever pays for it
 - Is this situation the same as the consulting one, or different? In what ways?
 - Suppose a hate group using your software calls asking for tech support. Do you help them?
 - Why or why not?

V. Third homework: applying ethical frameworks to a dilemma

- Discuss in detail
- You are graded on how well you show that you understand the theories (not on what you answer)

VI. Introduce the readings for next week

- Before section next week, put a quote from the Gilligan article on your section's canvas. Include the page number.
 - Make sure it's a quote that no one else has picked yet