

Reading Questions for January 30

These questions cover two readings: the first is by Julian Baggini and Peter S. Fosl and is called “Deontological Ethics.” The second is by Don Marquis and is called “An Argument that Abortion is Wrong.” The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers. We’re going to continue talking about the Marquis article on Monday, so you only have to read up to the part where the questions end.

*Background:*

We are continuing our look at three theories in normative ethics. As a reminder, normative ethics tries to speak in general about which things are morally right and which are morally wrong. The three theories we will examine are called “consequentialism”, “deontology”, and “virtue ethics.” The piece we are reading for today is about deontology.

Next, we’ll look at a piece by Don Marquis. Unlike Thomson and Warren, Marquis thinks that abortion is wrong.

*Questions:*

1. What is deontology? Of the authors we’ve read so far, which ones are deontologists? Is deontology plausible?
2. In the section titled “Why the Debate over Abortion Seems Intractable”, Marquis tries to explain why the debate over abortion seems intractable. He does so in two subsections. What is the goal of the first subsection? What is the goal of the second subsection? Is Marquis successful in explaining why the debate over abortion seems intractable?
3. In his next section, which starts on page 86, Marquis introduces what he calls the future like ours account of the wrongness of killing. What is this account? How does he come up with it?