INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS:  
Contemporary Ethical Issues  
179-100-14  
Tu/Th 10:15-11:30 a.m.  
Instructor: Madison Powers

Department of Philosophy  
Georgetown University  
Spring Semester, 1990

The aim of the course is to introduce the student to some of the major debates among modern ethical theories through their applications to a variety of contemporary social issues. Many of the readings focus upon conflicts between (1) overall social good (utility) and (2) individual rights and moral responsibility.

Course evaluation is based upon a take-home mid-term (40%), a take-home final examination (50%), and class participation (10%). Mid-term and final will consist of 2 short essay questions to be chosen from among 5-6 options. Mid-term will be handed out at the end of class on Tuesday, March 6 and is due by Friday, March 9. The final exam can be picked up at any time during the final exam period and returned within four days.

COURSE MATERIALS: Packet from Kinko's.

Part I. Varieties of Moral Theories

1/23 Introduction

Utilitarianism: A Critique of Religion and Common Sense Morality


The Defense of Common Sense and the Rejection of Utilitarianism

2/1 Ross, W.D., *The Right and the Good*, ch 2, pp 16-47.


Part II. Contemporary Issues: Life and Death

Abortion and Reproductive Ethics


War and Terrorism


Sanctity of Life; Quality of Life

3/1 Foot, P., "Euthanasia", in *Virtues and Vices*, pp 33-61.


3/8 NO CLASS: MIDTERM EXAMINATION (TAKE-HOME)

SPRING BREAK

Part III. Contemporary Issues: Individual Rights

Rights to Liberty: Homosexuality, Prostitution, and Pornography


The Right to Liberty and Beyond: Respect for Persons


The Right to Health Care

4/3 Singer, P., "Freedoms and Utilities in the Distribution of Health Care", in Veatch and Branson, eds, Ethics and Health Policy, pp 175-93.


EASTER

Hunger: The Right to Life and The Duty of Mutual Aid


4/19 O'Neill, O., "Lifeboat Earth", in Aiken and LaFollette, pp 148-64.

Part IV. Moral Deliberation and Hard Choices

The Effects of Moral Decisions on Others


The Effects of Moral Decisions on Agents


5/3 Taylor, G., "Integrity", in Pride, Shame, and Guilt, pp 108-41.