

James A. Blatt

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One Page Assignment

The Ethics of Good & Evil

Ethics as a standalone topic is an individual's relation to others. Within the concepts of Good and Evil this means that all of our actions in relation to others may be typified as either good or evil. This includes, for Aristotle legislating good for a society, usually out of benevolent design, or for Machiavelli "being good" as the archetype for virtuous interpersonal conduct. What is or is not good or evil is not necessarily universal and is hard to define.

According to the Google search "define evil", evil is "profound immorality and wickedness, especially when regarded as a supernatural force". A search for "define good" on Google returns for "that which is morally right; righteousness". In the context of the individual and her relation to others and society, good is usually judged by the mind of man and her disposition in the micro- or macrocosm she's viewed within. This allows for subjectivity in subsuming her behavior under the label of "good" or "evil".

Looking past the horrors of the holocaust, and any genocide that people could allegedly be innocently caught up in without a choice, we have only the law to fall back on. In a free society the law is per se reasonable; it is per se virtuous to adhere to; it is a per se good. Under the law, recklessness is not per se evil, and evil intent is reserved only for criminal acts. In the context of psychology, sociopaths and psychopaths who are not inclined to crime can be instructed to be feeling, caring, and even empathetic within what's lawful and unlawful according to the law. The law is their best barometer.

In our postmodern world the ethics of good and evil reduce to obedience to the law. As I mentioned to our interlocutor last Monday, only lawful, state sanctioned violence is legitimate. In the absence of a

lawful claim to right there is no legitimate violence and sanction is appropriate. The responsibility rests with the individual to carry out legitimate functions of the state dutifully and with the state to not arbitrarily impose penalties.

A narcoterrorist is defined as using state security services to further private drug profits in a way that subverts legitimate functions of the state. Just like within genocide, the duty rests with the individual state security personnel to not murder, or cover-up or conceal other crime in the name of a kingpin's drug profits that don't kick back to state coffers or further state ends. The argument follows, these state security personnel are duty bound to conscientiously object and quit if need be where government crime can't be guised as a legitimate function of the state.