

Science and Technology - Ethical Issues

Ethics and Morals compared

<u>Basis for Comparison</u>	<u>Morals</u>	<u>Ethics</u>
Meaning	Morals are the beliefs of the individual or group as to what is right or wrong.	Ethics are the guiding principles which help the individual or group to decide what is good or bad.
What is it?	General principles set by group	Response to a specific situation
Root word	Mos which means custom	Ethikos which means character
Governed By	Social and cultural norms	Individual or Legal and Professional norms
Deals with	Principles of right and wrong	Right and wrong conduct
Applicability in Business	No	Yes
Consistency	Morals may differ from society to society and culture to culture.	Ethics are generally uniform.
Expression	Morals are expressed in the form of general rules and statements.	Ethics are abstract.
Freedom to think and choose	No	Yes

Ethics and Morals and Law

- **Morals** are concerned with the principles of right and wrong behavior and the goodness or badness of human character.
- **Ethics** is the moral principles that govern a person's behavior or the conducting of an activity.
- **Law** is the system of rules that a particular country or community recognizes as regulating the actions of its members and may enforce by the imposition of penalties.

- **Ethics and morals** relate to “right” and “wrong” conduct. While they are sometimes used interchangeably, they are **different**:
 - **ethics** refer to rules provided by an external source, e.g., codes of conduct in workplaces or principles in religions.
 - **Morals** refer to an individual's own principles regarding right and wrong.
- **Morals and Law** differ because the law demands an absolute subjection to its rules and commands. Law has enforcing authority derived from the state. It is heteronymous (being imposed upon men upon the outer life of men). Law regulates men’s relations with others and with society.

Rights –
the corollary of morals / ethics / law

- What are rights?
- Where do rights come from?
- Who decides what rights should exist, who should have them, under what circumstances?
- Who enforces them? How?

Declaration of the Rights of Man - 1789

Approved by the National Assembly of France, August 26, 1789

The representatives of the French people, organized as a National Assembly, believing that the ignorance, neglect, or contempt of the rights of man are the sole cause of public calamities and of the corruption of governments, have determined to set forth in a solemn declaration the natural, unalienable, and sacred rights of man, in order that this declaration, being constantly before all the members of the Social body, shall remind them continually of their rights and duties; in order that the acts of the legislative power, as well as those of the executive power, may be compared at any moment with the objects and purposes of all political institutions and may thus be more respected, and, lastly, in order that the grievances of the citizens, based hereafter upon simple and incontestable principles, shall tend to the maintenance of the constitution and redound to the happiness of all. Therefore the National Assembly recognizes and proclaims, in the presence and under the auspices of the Supreme Being, the following rights of man and of the citizen:

Articles:

- **1.** Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.
- **2.** The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.
- **3.** The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. No body nor individual may exercise any authority which does not proceed directly from the nation.
- **4.** Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else; hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights. These limits can only be determined by law.
- **5.** Law can only prohibit such actions as are hurtful to society. Nothing may be prevented which is not forbidden by law, and no one may be forced to do anything not provided for by law.

Con't

- **6.** Law is the expression of the general will. Every citizen has a right to participate personally, or through his representative, in its foundation. It must be the same for all, whether it protects or punishes. All citizens, being equal in the eyes of the law, are equally eligible to all dignities and to all public positions and occupations, according to their abilities, and without distinction except that of their virtues and talents.
- **7.** No person shall be accused, arrested, or imprisoned except in the cases and according to the forms prescribed by law. Any one soliciting, transmitting, executing, or causing to be executed, any arbitrary order, shall be punished. But any citizen summoned or arrested in virtue of the law shall submit without delay, as resistance constitutes an offense.
- **8.** The law shall provide for such punishments only as are strictly and obviously necessary, and no one shall suffer punishment except it be legally inflicted in virtue of a law passed and promulgated before the commission of the offense.
- **9.** As all persons are held innocent until they shall have been declared guilty, if arrest shall be deemed indispensable, all harshness not essential to the securing of the prisoner's person shall be severely repressed by law.
- **10.** No one shall be disquieted on account of his opinions, including his religious views, provided their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law.
- **11.** The free communication of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen may, accordingly, speak, write, and print with freedom, but shall be responsible for such abuses of this freedom as shall be defined by law.
- **12.** The security of the rights of man and of the citizen requires public military forces. These forces are, therefore, established for the good of all and not for the personal advantage of those to whom they shall be intrusted.
- **13.** A common contribution is essential for the maintenance of the public forces and for the cost of administration. This should be equitably distributed among all the citizens in proportion to their means.

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- **14.** All the citizens have a right to decide, either personally or by their representatives, as to the necessity of the public contribution; to grant this freely; to know to what uses it is put; and to fix the proportion, the mode of assessment and of collection and the duration of the taxes.
- **15.** Society has the right to require of every public agent an account of his administration.
- **16.** A society in which the observance of the law is not assured, nor the separation of powers defined, has no constitution at all.
- **17.** Since property is an inviolable and sacred right, no one shall be deprived thereof except where public necessity, legally determined, shall clearly demand it, and then only on condition that the owner shall have been previously and equitably indemnified.

Exceptions

While the French Revolution provided rights to a larger portion of the population, there remained **a distinction between those who obtained the political rights in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen and those who did not**. Those who were deemed to hold these political rights were called active citizens. **Active citizenship was granted to men who were French, at least 25 years old, paid taxes equal to three days work, and could not be defined as servants** (Thouret).[[]This meant that at the time of the Declaration **only male property owners held these rights**.[[]The deputies in the National Assembly believed that only those who held tangible interests in the nation could make informed political decisions.[[]This distinction directly affects articles 6, 12, 14, and 15 of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen as each of these rights is related to the right to vote and to participate actively in the government. With the decree of 29 October 1789, the term active citizen became embedded in French politics.

- Our discussion of ethical questions will therefore include several perspectives, of which the foregoing are some examples.

Examples of Issues

- Surveillance and Privacy – is there a right to know how our personal information is used? Control how it is used?
- Robots – do they have rights? Should they? What rights?
- Products – is there a right to know products are made? Should there be?
- Ubiquitous technologies – is there a right to not be forced to use certain technologies? Which ones?
- Robots and AI constituting the new workforce – is there a right to an income (UBI)? Who gets one? Who pays for it?
- Increased life span – will there be special rights for those with significantly expanded lifespans? What rights? Special obligations?

Topics

- AI and Robots
- Medical Enhancements
- Privacy “vs.” Surveillance / Big Data
- Limits on Research?

- Link to TED Talks video
- https://www.ted.com/playlists/329/new_tech_new_morals

- AI and Robots
 - How do we control “superior” thinkers?
 - Who, what, where, when, why?
 - How far to go with development before we can envision control? Implement it?
 - When are they more than machines?
 - Limits on uses?
 - Loss of jobs and income?
 - Unequal distribution?

- Medical enhancements
 - Increased life spans
 - Enhanced abilities
 - Changing ourselves
 - Costs
 - Unequal distribution
 - Opting out

- Privacy
 - Surveillance
 - Big data
 - Drones

- Limits on research (how far is too far / should certain areas be off-limit completely)?
 - Why?
 - Ethical issue?
 - Moral issue?
 - Legal issue?
 - Who sets limits?
 - Who could anticipate this anyway?