

The ethics analysis chart.

(Analysis in the following areas helps one to understand any ethical perspective):

METAPHYSICS/RELIGION/COSMOLOGY

In what ways, if any, is the ethics dependent on a given conception of ultimate reality, including divine realities?

ANTHROPOLOGY

Beliefs about human nature are important to every ethical perspective. Such attitudes determine what a person thinks human communities are capable of achieving (peace and harmony, or something less?), and whether people have sufficient free will to act morally in the first place. In what ways does the anthropology influence the ethics. Is the view of human nature dependent on a particular metaphysics or religious world view? If so, how?

Epistemology

Whether people can know anything at all also depends on anthropology--how do people know what they know? Epistemology is the study of theories of knowledge. In what ways does the explicit or implicit epistemology influence the ethics? How are the epistemological assumptions dependent on the ethics' anthropology or metaphysics?

Induction?

Deduction?

Metaethics: examining ethical justifications

Metaethics examines the grounding and justification of ethical perspectives. Metaethics, then, analyzes the moral epistemologies which underlie ethical theories. Such analysis suggests there are three common ways in which people justify their moral norms. How is the ethics justified?

Naturalism?

Non-cognitivism?

Intuitionism?

TWO MAJOR NORMATIVE ETHICAL THEORIES

TELEOLOGICAL THEORIES

ends-based determination of right and wrong

DEONTOLOGICAL THEORIES

some actions are intrinsically right or wrong

Both types must reflect and come to terms with each of the three principles of ethics:

Beneficence

(What is the common good? What is the proper human end?)

Justice

(How ought the burdens and benefits of society be distributed?)

Rights

(What liberties, if any, ought to be considered inviolable?)

RULES OF ETHICS

What general rules are deduced from the three principles of ethics?

NORMATIVE ETHICAL JUDGMENTS

What specific actions are promoted by the ethics?
How is the model applied in actual cases?

STRENGTHS/WEAKNESSES OF THE ETHICS: