



# ETHICS AND ECONOMICS

Lecture Notes for Week 3

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# Utilitarianism and Justice

In the first and in the second part of this chapter, we present utilitarianism within the broader framework of the Empiricist Enlightenment movement that took place in the 17th and 18th centuries. We explore its connections with hedonism and stoicism and illustrate some key ideas of this movement through the works of David Hume and Adam Smith. We introduce utilitarianism as developed by Jeremy Bentham and discuss its further evolution by John Stuart Mill. The third part of this chapter covers the role of utilitarianism in contemporary economics, particularly as it has developed since the marginalist revolution of the 1870s.

In Appendix 1, several points for discussing the topic of abortion are presented. Appendix 2 promotes Jeremy Bentham's *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*. Appendix 3 provides additional information on the readings highlighted in Chapters 1 and 2.

## Empiricist Enlightenment

The core features of this movement include:

- **Empiricism:** All knowledge originates from sensory experience. Empiricists argue that we gain understanding through observing the world, conducting experiments, and gathering data.
- **Scientific Method:** The empiricist approach prioritizes the scientific method, which involves systematic observation, experimentation, and the formulation of theories based on evidence. This method became the gold standard for acquiring and validating knowledge.
- **Skepticism of Authority:** Empiricists were often skeptical of traditional authorities, such as the Church and ancient texts, instead advocating for evidence-based inquiry. This skepticism extended to challenging established norms and dogmas.
- **Individual Liberty and Human Progress:** Enlightenment thinkers who valued empiricism advocated for individual freedom, rights, and education. They believed that applying reason and empirical methods could drive human progress, improve governance, and promote social reform.

Sensory experience brings not only knowledge but also pleasure and pain. When we regard pleasure as the highest good and primary motivator of human life, we are proponents of hedonism. Hedonists believe that the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain are the most important goals, guiding ethical decision-making and behavior. This perspective can be divided into various forms, such as **ethical hedonism**, which suggests that actions are morally right if they maximize pleasure and minimize pain, and **psychological hedonism**, which claims that human beings are naturally driven to seek pleasure and avoid pain.

In hedonism, reason serves to obtain pleasure and avoid pain as:

- A **technical tool**, helping us achieve desired goals.
- A **pragmatic tool**, allowing us to calculate pleasures and pains to select desired goals.

Hedonism is considered an art of living, with an inherently egoistic orientation.

Classical hedonism in ancient Greece is best exemplified by two philosophers: **Aristippus of Cyrene** and **Epicurus**. Aristippus (?435–356 BCE), founder of the Cyrenaic school, promoted the pursuit of immediate physical pleasure and the avoidance of pain as essential for a happy and fulfilling life. Unlike later hedonists, Aristippus emphasized the importance of present pleasures, arguing that future or abstract considerations should not detract from enjoying the present moment. He believed that individuals should cultivate the ability to control their desires and adapt to circumstances to maximize pleasure. His philosophy also highlighted the importance of mental and physical flexibility, teaching that one should maintain personal autonomy and avoid being controlled by external circumstances or societal norms.

Epicurus (341–270 BCE), the founder of Epicureanism, also emphasized the pursuit of happiness through pleasure but with a significant twist compared to Aristippus's approach. Epicurus taught that the greatest pleasure is attained not through fleeting physical sensations but through the cultivation of *ataraxia*, a tranquil and serene mind.

Epicurus developed his philosophy during a time of significant social and political upheaval. He believed that these external disturbances could best be managed by focusing on personal well-being and intellectual fulfillment. By minimizing unnecessary desires, avoiding pain, and understanding the natural world—including dispelling fears of gods and death—Epicureans sought to create a serene mental state immune to external chaos. They

advocated for withdrawal from public life, focusing instead on personal relationships, philosophical contemplation, and a self-sufficient lifestyle to achieve a stable and contented existence. This philosophy primarily concerned individual existence within a small community, which is why it can be considered egoistic at its core.

**Stoicism**, developed by philosophers like Zeno of Citium (c. 334–262 BCE), Epictetus (c. 50–135 CE), and Marcus Aurelius (121–180 CE), offered a framework for maintaining personal virtue and rationality amidst social upheaval. Stoics believed that while external events are beyond human control, individuals can achieve inner peace and resilience by focusing on their responses and upholding virtues such as wisdom, courage, justice, and temperance. Stoicism taught that suffering and turmoil are inevitable parts of life, but these can be endured with equanimity by accepting nature's order and understanding that true power lies in choosing one's reactions and attitudes. Unlike Epicureanism, Stoicism did not advocate for withdrawing from public life. Instead, it encouraged active participation in societal duties, emphasizing that living according to reason and virtue is possible even amid chaos and uncertainty.

Both Epicureanism and Stoicism significantly influenced the Enlightenment by contributing foundational ideas that shaped the period's philosophical landscape. Epicureanism's emphasis on the pursuit of sensory experience resonated with Enlightenment thinkers who valued scientific inquiry and evidence-based understanding. Meanwhile, Stoicism's focus on rationality, self-control, and virtuous living informed the moral philosophy of the Enlightenment, highlighting reason and ethical behavior as essential components in the pursuit of a good life.

**David Hume (1711 – 1776)** was one of the key figures of the Empiricist Enlightenment. He engaged with both Epicureanism and Stoicism, appreciating their contributions to moral philosophy while also critiquing their limitations. Hume admired Epicureanism for its empirical approach to knowledge and its focus on achieving happiness through moderate pleasures and the avoidance of pain. He found the Epicurean emphasis on sensory experience and the pursuit of tranquility to be aligned with his own empirical and skeptical philosophy. However, he critiqued Epicureanism for its potential to encourage a hedonistic lifestyle that might undermine societal norms and duties. Hume also had a nuanced view of Stoicism, respecting its emphasis on virtue, rationality, and resilience in the face of

adversity. He acknowledged the Stoic commitment to maintaining a virtuous character as an admirable goal but criticized Stoicism for its excessive reliance on reason and the suppression of emotions, which he believed were integral to human nature and moral judgment. Hume argued that Stoicism's ideal of complete rational detachment was unrealistic, as it neglected the essential role of passions in guiding human behavior.

Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature*, published in 1739–1740, is a foundational work in philosophy, aiming to introduce the experimental method of reasoning into moral subjects. Throughout the *Treatise*, Hume grounds his arguments in observations and experience, dividing the work into three books: "Of the Understanding," "Of the Passions," and "Of Morals."

- **"Of the Understanding"**: In this section, Hume explores noetics (the study of the mind, intellect, and consciousness) and epistemology (the study of knowledge, its nature, scope, and limits). He argues that all ideas are derived from sensory impressions and introduces the concept of the "association of ideas," explaining how thoughts are linked by resemblance, contiguity, and cause and effect.
- **"Of the Passions"**: Hume shifts focus to human emotions, which he views as essential to understanding behavior. He distinguishes between direct passions (such as desire and aversion) and indirect passions (such as pride and humility), examining how these emotions arise from experiences and perceptions. Hume emphasizes the role of feelings in motivating action, challenging the view that reason alone governs human behavior. He famously posits that reason is, and ought to be, the slave of the passions, asserting that emotions drive our actions and decisions, while reason serves as a technical and pragmatic tool.
- **"Of Morals"**: In this section, Hume explores ethical theory and the nature of virtue and vice. He challenges the rationalist view that morality is based on reason, instead proposing that moral judgments arise from human sentiments. Hume introduces the concept of moral sentiment, suggesting that our approval or disapproval of actions stems from feelings of pleasure or pain. He analyzes "personal merits" (values) and finds that people tend to value qualities that are altruistic and socially oriented, rather than egoistic. "Extensive sympathy," understood here as empathy toward the feelings of others, acts as a communication channel for assessing emotions and contributes to

the formation of a non-egoistic, “steady and general point of view.” Through this process, moral sentiments that are shared across society emerge, forming a kind of collective morality grounded in commonly accepted rules.

Following our moral sentiments tends to increase pleasure and reduce pain individually, but it also promotes social welfare, as moral sentiments are collectively experienced within society. Rational reflection can reveal that it is pragmatic to act according to moral sentiment since social cooperation generally serves our interests better than confrontation. However, it is ultimately sentiment, rather than rational insight, that motivates our actions.

Hume also addresses the role of justice and other virtues in maintaining moral norms. He notes that there is often a time inconsistency in our behavior, where we are tempted to break norms for short-term benefits. However, a sense of justice and other virtues can help sustain these norms and align our actions with our long-term interests.

**Adam Smith (1723 – 1790)** was a close friend of David Hume, and his major works include:

- *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759)
- *Lectures on Justice, Police, Revenue and Arms* (1763)
- *The Wealth of Nations* (1776)
- *Essays on Philosophical Subjects* (1795), which contains “The History of Astronomy,” believed to have been written between 1744 and 1748 during his early academic career, although it was not published during his lifetime.

“The History of Astronomy” is primarily an epistemological work, exploring how knowledge in astronomy has evolved and been justified over time. It also contains some ontological elements, discussing the nature of the universe. The work is notable for examining how scientific thought progresses, with new theories replacing older, less accurate ones. Smith discusses the psychological comfort people derive from theories that provide order and predictability. Additionally, he highlights the roles of imagination and wonder in advancing scientific knowledge, suggesting that curiosity drives the quest for understanding.

*The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, first published in 1759, examines the foundations of human morality and ethical behavior. Smith posits that moral judgments are rooted in innate human sympathy—the capacity to understand and share the feelings of others. He

argues that our sense of right and wrong is influenced by the “impartial spectator,” an imagined viewpoint that enables objective evaluation of our own and others' actions.

While both Smith and Hume considered emotions central to morality and shared an empirical approach, Hume emphasized natural sentiments as the basis of moral judgments. In contrast, Smith introduced the concept of the impartial spectator to stress the importance of social perspective and self-reflection in ethical behavior. Smith’s framework incorporates both emotional responses and rational considerations through the imagined perspective of an unbiased observer.

*Lectures on Justice, Police, Revenue, and Arms*, derived from a student's notes of Smith's lectures at the University of Glasgow in the 1760s, is a comprehensive examination of political economy and government functions. These lectures laid the groundwork for many ideas Smith would later expand upon in his seminal work, *The Wealth of Nations*, detailing the fundamental responsibilities of government in fostering a prosperous and stable society.

## Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism was presented in its extreme form by **Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832)**. Information about this philosopher, who was also a social reformer, and his seminal work *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* can be found in the recommended reading section at the end of this chapter.

Bentham defines utility as the net balance between the intensity and duration of pleasure and the intensity and duration of pain. He believes utility maximization has a natural biological basis, meaning it is an inherent aspect of human psychology (psychological hedonism). He was especially a social reformer; his ideas are foundational for political philosophy. According to Bentham, a just government’s role is to maximize utility for the greatest number of people, aiming to ground politics in scientific principles. His reasoning is consequentialist, focusing on outcomes rather than intentions when evaluating actions.

Bentham believes utility is quantifiable, a belief now referred to as cardinal utility. He introduces a unit for measuring utility, called a "util." The number of utils depends on factors such as intensity, duration, probability, and the remoteness of pleasure and pain.



Bentham posits that interpersonal comparisons of utility are possible because all humans share the same psychology. However, developments in economics have since led to the abandonment of cardinal utility in favor of ordinal utility and a general rejection of interpersonal utility comparisons, as exemplified by economists from the Austrian school.

To address the question of why we need a government, we can illustrate Bentham's perspective in Figure 3.1.

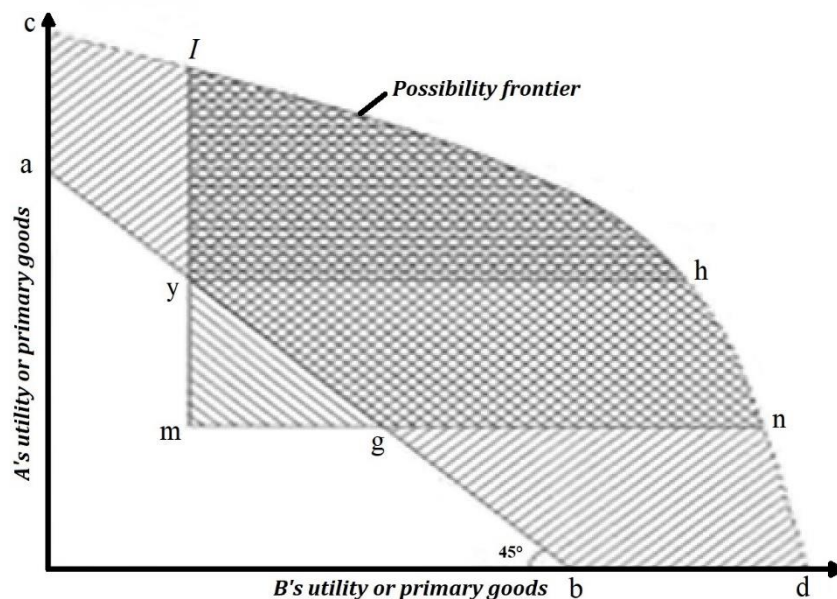


Figure 3.1: Bentham and Rawls in one diagram.

The curve c-d represents the utility possibility frontier. Starting from a point on the line a-b, such as point y, the utility for both individuals can be increased by redistributing primary goods in a way that moves us to a point northeast of y. These points can be reached through voluntary exchanges. More generally, we can increase total utility by redistributing primary goods to reach points above the a-b line, where the 45-degree slope indicates that the utilities of individuals A and B are comparable. Not all of these points can be achieved through voluntary exchanges alone; some require government redistribution. (We will revisit this graph later when discussing the political philosophy of John Rawls.)

Bentham's motivation was to build politics on scientific grounds. Consider the

following set of policies and their impact in utils on three individuals:

	Status Quo	Policy I	Policy II	Policy III	Policy IV	Policy V
Person A	6(utils)	1000	8	10	16	8
Person B	6	1	7	9	1	7
Person C	6	1	4	0	1	3

According to Bentham's highest principle of morality, which policy would be scientifically chosen? We can observe that Policy IV is dominated by Policy I, and Policy V by Policy IV, so these can be eliminated. Policy I yields the highest number of utils, though it does not increase utility for the maximum number of people—two individuals are worse off compared to the status quo. Policy II increases utility for the greatest number of people, but the average utility is lower than that of Policy I. Policy III, however, lets the third person starve. (This example and the preceding graph are from Ian Shapiro's Yale course.)

If we allow interpersonal comparisons and consider the later-developed concept of diminishing marginal utility, we can logically arrive at the idea that the State may redistribute resources to achieve equality. What was Bentham's perspective on this? We find the answer in his "Principles of the Civil Code," which, although largely completed by 1802, was published posthumously in 1843. Bentham suggested that the State should redistribute to the point of "practical equality" rather than "absolute equality." He recognized that redistribution could undermine incentives to work and negatively affect the creation of utility. Today, we refer to this argument as the "equity-efficiency trade-off." Bentham's understanding of the relationship between the individual and the State can be encapsulated by his statement: "Labor creates utility, law preserves it."

**John Stuart Mill (1806 – 1873)** was a British political economist and philosopher who expanded upon the utilitarian principles established by Jeremy Bentham, particularly in his work *"Utilitarianism"* (1863). Unlike Bentham, who made no distinction between different types of pleasure, Mill distinguished between higher and lower pleasures. In *Utilitarianism*, he famously stated, "It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied." He argued that respecting

human rights maximizes utility in the long run.

His *"The Principles of Political Economy with Some of Their Applications to Social Philosophy"* (1848) was the standard economic textbook in the Anglo-Saxon world until 1890, when Alfred Marshall's *Principles of Economics* was first published.

The required readings for the 8th week include the first two chapters from Mill's *"On Liberty"* (1859). Here are some important points from that essay:

- He formulates the Harm Principle.
- He emphasizes freedom of speech as essential for discovering truth. A notable comparison is that truth emerges as a by-product of the free exchange of ideas, just as utility maximization (market efficiency) is a by-product of the free exchange of goods.
- He implicitly distinguishes between argumentation and deliberation:
  - **Argumentation** involves presenting and defending one's position while critically examining opposing views, ensuring that beliefs are not held dogmatically but are subject to continual scrutiny and improvement.
  - **Deliberation** involves open and respectful discussion where participants listen to each other, consider different viewpoints, and seek common ground. This process ensures that decisions are made based on a thorough evaluation of all relevant information and perspectives.
- He argues that all knowledge is corrigible, marking an important shift from the early Enlightenment's focus on verification to the philosophical principle of Falsificationism later proposed by Karl Popper (1902–1994).

Discussion on utilitarianism continues, with current debates including:

- Utilitarian (as Consequentialist) reasoning versus Deontological reasoning. A classic discussion of this question is in Plato's dialogue *Phaedo*—utilitarian reasoning cannot explain Socrates's behavior in his jail.
- Distributive justice: redistribution to increase total utility can conflict with individual freedom.
- The difficulty of predicting future pleasures and pains—what we now call benefits and costs.
- Act utilitarianism versus rule utilitarianism: Act utilitarianism considers the immediate

- outcomes of specific acts, while rule utilitarianism emphasizes the long-term benefits of following established rules that promote overall well-being.
- The authenticity of life: You can be happy in a virtual world, but does that life make sense? This question is nicely illustrated in Robert Nozick's *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (1974), where he presents the thought experiment of an “Experience Machine” that can provide any desired pleasurable experiences indistinguishable from reality. By connecting to this machine, individuals could experience a life of uninterrupted pleasure.

## Utilitarianism in Current Economics

In this subchapter, a few diagrams are presented, which are commonly used in basic economics courses. The knowledge contained in these diagrams has been accumulated since the Marginalist Revolution of the 1870s.

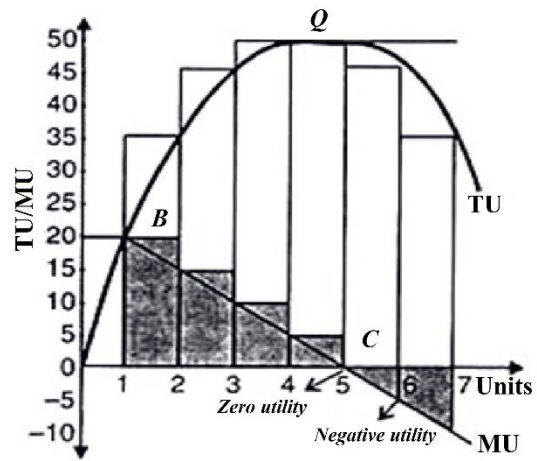


Figure 3.2: The law of diminishing marginal utility.

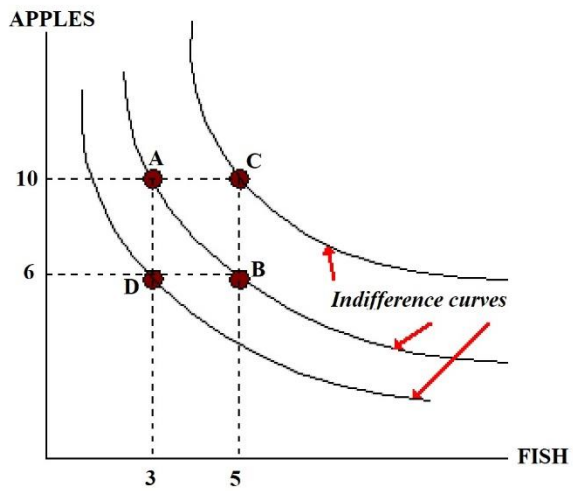


Figure 3.3: Indifference curves mark the shift from cardinal to ordinal utility:

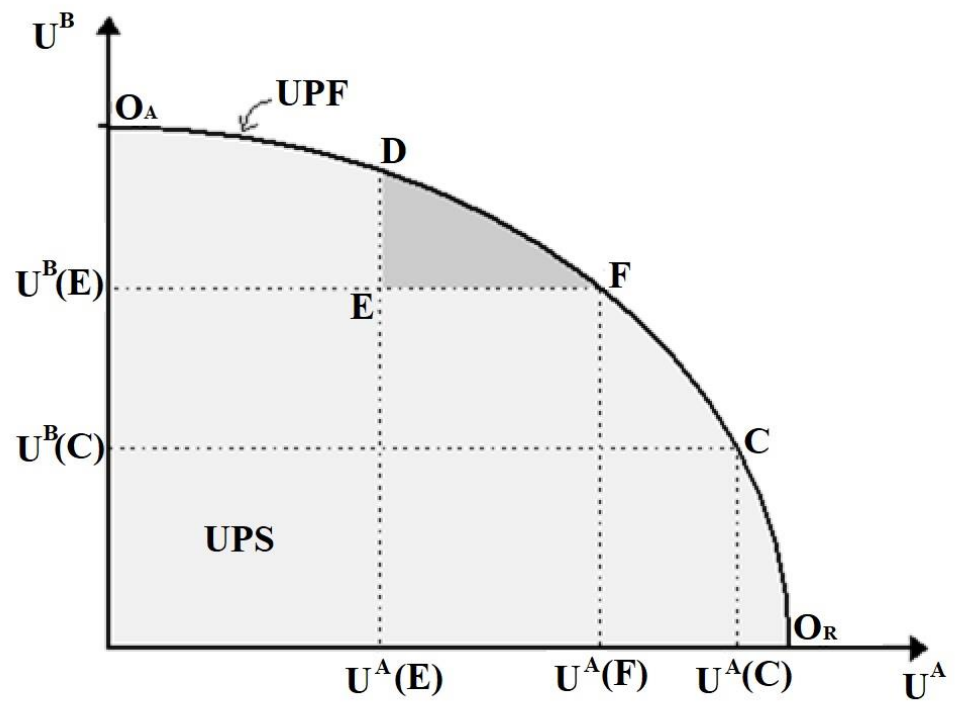


Figure 3.4: Utility Possibility Frontier (UPF) and Pareto Efficiency. (Utilities of two individuals are on axes. Points on the UPF are Pareto Efficient – we cannot make someone better off without making someone worse off.)

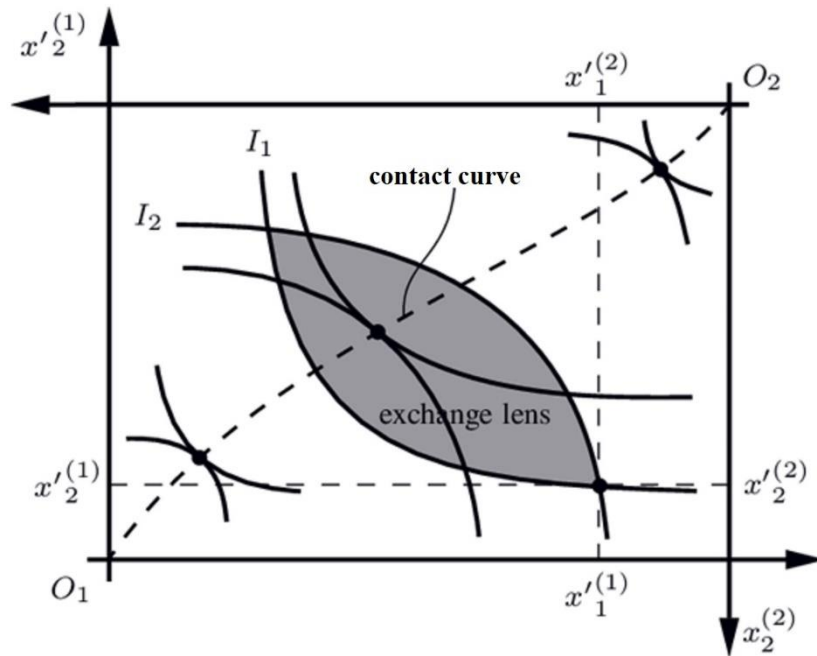


Figure 3.5: Edgeworth box: mirrored image of indifference curves for two individuals. (Part of the contract curve between  $I_1$  and  $I_2$  corresponds to the UPF between D and F in Figure 3.4.)

Can we get the utility function for an individual? Revealed Preference Theory suggests that we can get the utility function by observing individual choices.

Can we compare utilities between different economic actors? Generally accepted opinion is that no, nevertheless in Welfare Economics we often do just that, as in the following example in Figure 3.6.

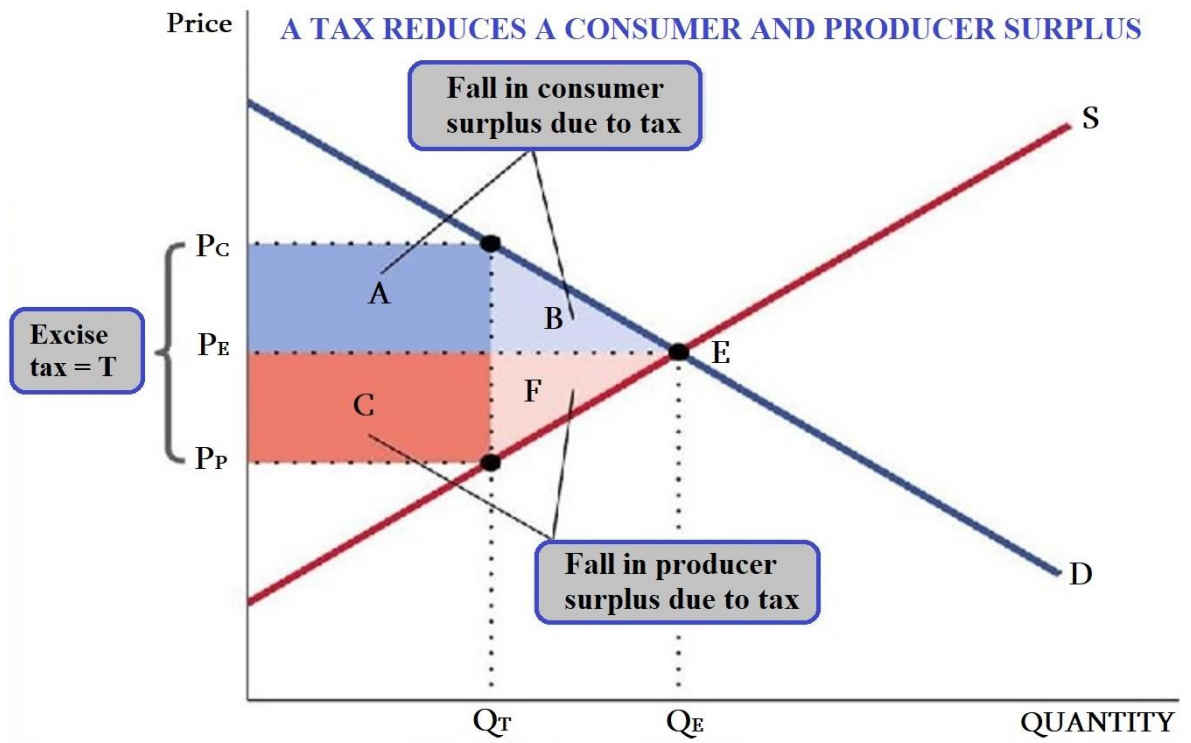


Figure 3.6: Effect of a tax on consumer and producer Surplus.



# Summary

The first section covers the Empiricist Enlightenment. Among its core features is an emphasis on the scientific method, which contrasts with earlier rationalism by focusing on empirical facts. The pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain can be seen both as a psychological fact and as a moral prescription, with hedonism embracing it as the latter. It is important to understand the historical context of hedonism; in ancient Greece, it emerged during a period of social turmoil and loss of order. Another possible response to such circumstances is stoicism. Unlike hedonism, stoicism values rationality, virtue, and resilience in response to life's challenges. Both hedonism and stoicism have consistently influenced European culture and tend to gain strength during times of upheaval.

The Empiricist Enlightenment is illustrated through the works of David Hume and Adam Smith, two close friends and key figures of the Scottish branch of this movement. It is important to recognize that their work spans a wide range of topics, beginning with general philosophy, especially epistemology, and then moving into ethics and economics.

The second section deals with utilitarianism, outlining the basic ideas of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. It is essential to realize that Bentham was especially a social reformer; he saw the maximization of individual utility—defined as the difference between pleasure and pain—as rooted in human psychology, and viewed the maximization of utility for the greatest number of citizens as the role of government. He was extreme in considering the maximization of utility as the sole motivator for human action. His approach requires that utility is measurable, and Bentham believed it truly was. He did not distinguish between lower and higher pleasures; this distinction was introduced by his follower, J. S. Mill. Mill contributed significantly not only to the development of utilitarianism but also to epistemology, logic, and the concept of liberty, and authored *The Principles of Political Economy*, which was used as a primary textbook in the Anglo-Saxon world for over forty years. The discussion on utilitarianism continues, with some current topics mentioned at the end of this section.

In the third section, the application of utility in modern economics is illustrated. Since the marginalist revolution, the understanding of utility has evolved from cardinal to ordinal utility, and

from accepting the possibility of interpersonal utility comparisons to rejecting it. Even after almost 150 years, marginal utility remains a key concept in economics.

# Appendix 1: Abortion

Abortion is both a "freedom issue" and a "life issue."

## **Facts:**

Reasons that individuals may seek an abortion include:

1. Protection of the woman's life,
2. Protection of the woman's physical or mental health,
3. A high likelihood that the pregnancy will result in a severely impaired child,
4. Pregnancy resulting from rape or incest,
5. Social stigma against unmarried mothers in some societies,
6. Financial burdens associated with having another child,
7. Potential interference with the well-being or happiness of the woman or her family.

**Therapeutic abortion** is generally performed for reasons 1, 2, 3, and sometimes 4.

## **Development of the Human Fetus:**

- **Conception:** An embryo is created with a complete genetic code.
- **8 to 10 days post-conception:** The embryo implants itself on the uterine wall.
- **End of the 8th week:** The embryonic period ends; the fetus begins to show recognizable human characteristics and brain activity.
- **16 to 18 weeks:** The woman may begin to feel fetal movement.
- **Around the 22nd week:** The fetus reaches a stage where viability outside the womb becomes a possibility.

## **Ethical Question:**

To what point of fetal development, if any, and for what reasons, if any, is abortion ethically acceptable? Perspectives vary: conservative, liberal, and moderate views differ based on combinations of these answers.

## **Concept of Moral Personality:**

Moral persons are seen as members of the moral community with moral status and rights. Moral personhood is not restricted to human beings alone; full or partial moral status is often debated. Key attributes of moral persons include:

- Self-consciousness,

- Reasoning ability,
- Capacity to communicate,
- Self-motivated activity,
- Ability to feel pain.

### **Ethical Debate on Abortion:**

#### **Use of different principles:**

- **Universalizability Principle** (related to the Kantian approach, which will be discussed in the 6th week): I cannot will that my mother should have had an abortion with me, except perhaps if it were certain that the embryo was either dead or severely damaged. If I cannot will this in my own case, how can I consistently deny others the right to life that I claim for myself?
- **“Golden Rule” Principle:** I cannot will that my mother should have had an abortion with me, except perhaps if it were certain that the embryo was either dead or severely damaged. If I cannot will this in my own case, how can I consistently deny others the right to life that I claim for myself?
- **Murder** – the intentional taking of an innocent life – is wrong. Therefore, abortion is wrong.
- **Right of Privacy** (disposition over one's own body): At the stage when the embryo is essentially part of the mother's body, the mother has a right to make her own, uncoerced decision on whether or not to have an abortion.
- **Consequentialist Reasoning** (the previous principles were deontological): Late abortions are morally indecent, have a brutalizing effect on those involved, and undermine respect for human life.

### **Feminism:**

- **Basic Claims:**
  - Traditional society is patriarchal.
  - Many institutions in contemporary society continue to advantage men at the expense of women.
  - Traditional values and thought patterns often reflect a male perspective and

- persist in contemporary societies.
- **Feminist ethics** emphasizes the importance of relationships and the responsibilities that these relationships entail.
  - **Feminist Ethics** highlights the significance of relationships and the responsibilities that emerge from them.
    - **Are biological parents responsible for an unwanted potential child?**  
ChatGPT4 answer: The responsibility of biological parents for an unwanted potential child is a complex ethical issue involving moral, legal, and social considerations. Ethically, some argue that engaging in activities leading to conception carries inherent responsibility, while others believe responsibility arises only once a child is conceived or born. Legally, parental obligations typically begin after conception. Socially, there is an expectation for parents to ensure a child's well-being, but there is also a call for societal support for unintended pregnancies. The extent of responsibility varies based on individual beliefs, legal frameworks, and societal values.

### **Conclusion of the Ethical Debate:**

Positions on abortion that are based on valid argumentation from general principles are often contradictory, and ethical discussions appear contradictory as well. This underscores the importance of the question: What gives authority to general principles?

### **Economic and Political Debate:**

#### **What are economic impacts of the legalization of abortion?**

CHatGPT4 answer: The legalization of abortion has widespread economic benefits, including enhancing financial stability and career opportunities for individuals, reducing public expenditure on welfare and healthcare and boosting overall economic productivity and growth. It also leads to better educational and employment outcomes for women, contributes positively to the labor market, and improves resource allocation within the healthcare system. These impacts highlight the significant role of legal abortion access in promoting economic well-being and societal progress.

While the legalization of abortion generally has positive economic impacts, there

are potential negative implications such as initial increases in public healthcare costs, demographic shifts that affect the labor force and social security systems, persistent access inequalities, and economic costs associated with political and social controversy. These considerations highlight the importance of comprehensive policies and support systems to mitigate any negative economic impacts and ensure equitable access to reproductive healthcare.

### **Is the Czech abortion law conservative, liberal or moderate?**

CHatGPT4 answer: The Czech abortion law is liberal, allowing abortion on request up to the 12th week of pregnancy without restrictive conditions. The law provides for broad access to abortion services, emphasizes women's autonomy in making healthcare decisions, and is consistent with the country's overall progressive stance on reproductive rights.

### **Who ought to pay for abortion?**

CHatGPT4 answer: The question of who ought to pay for abortion is a complex and multifaceted issue that involves ethical, legal, and policy considerations. Here are several perspectives on this issue:

#### **Public Funding - Government and Public Health Systems:**

**Justification:** Advocates argue that access to abortion is a fundamental healthcare right and that it should be covered by public health systems to ensure that all women, regardless of their financial status, have access to safe and legal abortion services. This approach emphasizes equity and public health.

**Examples:** In many countries with national healthcare systems, such as the United Kingdom and Canada, abortion services are funded by the government.

#### **Private Insurance - Health Insurance Companies:**

**Justification:** Health insurance companies could cover abortion as part of comprehensive reproductive healthcare. This would ensure that women who have private insurance can access abortion services without significant out-of-pocket expenses.

**Examples:** In some countries and states, private health insurance plans include coverage for abortion services, either by mandate or choice.

#### Out-of-Pocket Payment - **Individuals:**

**Justification:** Some argue that individuals should bear the cost of abortion services to avoid using public funds for a procedure that may be ethically controversial to some taxpayers. This perspective often aligns with more conservative views on reproductive rights and public spending.

**Challenges:** This can create significant financial barriers for low-income women, potentially limiting their access to safe and legal abortions.

#### Out of Pocket Payment - **Non-Profit or Charity Organizations**

**Justification:** Charitable organizations and non-profits dedicated to reproductive rights can help fund abortions for women who cannot afford them. This approach relies on donations and philanthropic support to provide access to abortion services.

**Examples:** Organizations like Planned Parenthood in the United States offer subsidized or free abortion services to those in need.

## Appendix 2: Jeremy Bentham: “An Introduction to the Principles of Moral and Legislation”

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) was an English philosopher, jurist, and social reformer, best known as the founder of modern utilitarianism. He wanted to base politics on scientific grounds, he emphasized rationality and empirical evidence.

Bentham's wish to preserve his dead body was consistent with his utilitarian philosophy. His skeleton and head were preserved and stored in a wooden cabinet called the "auto-icon", with the skeleton padded out with hay and dressed in Bentham's clothes. In 2020, the auto-icon was put into a new glass display case and moved to the entrance of the University College London's new Student Centre.





"An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation" is a foundational text in utilitarian philosophy, published in 1789. In this work, Bentham articulates the principle of utility, which posits that the morality of political actions is determined by their contribution to overall happiness or pleasure, and their ability to minimize pain. He introduces a method for calculating the utility of actions through a "felicific calculus," considering factors such as intensity, duration, certainty, and proximity of pleasure and pain. Bentham also discusses the importance of legal and social reforms to align laws with the utilitarian principle, aiming to create a legal system that maximizes social welfare and justice. From "Preface": „Of this logic of the will, the science of law, considered in respect of its form, is the most considerable branch, the most important application. It is, to the art of legislation, what the science of anatomy is to the art of medicine. “

# Appendix 3: More about readings promoted in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> chapters

## Plato: The Republic, Book II:

- In Book 1, there are three definitions of justice that Socrates opposes:
  - Justice is to give to each what is owed to them.
  - Justice is to give to each what is appropriate to him.
  - Justice is what is advantageous for the stronger.
- In Book 2,
  - Socrates opposes the opinion that “it is better to seem just and to be unjust” than “to be just and to seem unjust”.
  - Socrates admits that justice is one of that highest class of goods which are desired indeed for their results, but in a far greater degree for their own sakes.
  - Socrates suggests enquiring into the nature of justice and injustice, first as they appear in the State, and secondly in the individual, proceeding from the greater to the lesser and comparing them.
  - “A State arises out of the needs of mankind; no one is self-sufficing, but all of us have many wants. “
  - We exchange with one another, and one gives, and another receives, under the idea that the exchange will be for their good.
  - Discussing ones then explore how to obtain guardians who will not become tyrants to the people they guard. Socrates proposes that they solve the problem with an education from their early years. He then prescribes the necessary education, beginning with the kind of stories that are appropriate for training guardians. They conclude that stories that ascribe evil to the gods or heroes or portray the afterlife as bad are untrue and should not be told.
- In further books, Socrates presents the following fictional tale to convince everyone in the city to perform their social role. All are born from the womb of their mother country, so that all are siblings, but their natures are different, each containing either

gold (guardians), silver (auxiliaries), or bronze or iron (producers). If anyone with a bronze or iron nature rules the city, it will be destroyed. Socrates claims that if the people believed "this myth...[it] would have a good effect, making them more inclined to care for the state and one another. „, Socrates claims the city will be happiest if each citizen engages in the occupation that suits them best. If the city as a whole is happy, then individuals are happy.

- In further books, the discussing ones proceed to search for wisdom, courage, and temperance in the city, on the grounds that justice will be easier to discern in what remains. They find wisdom among the guardian rulers, courage among the guardian warriors (or auxiliaries), temperance among all classes of the city in agreeing about who should rule and who should be ruled. Finally, Socrates defines justice in the city as the state in which each class performs only its own work, not meddling in the work of the other classes.
- In further books, Plato categorized governments into five types of regimes: aristocracy, timocracy, oligarchy, democracy and tyranny.
- In democracy, the lower class grows bigger and bigger. A visually appealing demagogue is soon lifted up to protect the interests of the lower class, who can exploit them to take power in order to maintain order. Democracy then degenerates into tyranny. The tyrant uses his guards to remove the best social elements and individuals from the city to retain power (since they pose a threat). He will also provoke warfare to consolidate his position as leader. In this way, tyranny is the most unjust regime of all.

**Alisdair McIntyre: After Virtue, Chapter 14 “The Nature of the Virtues”:**

- „But of course it is not that Homer's list of virtues differs only from our own; it also notably differs from Aristotle's. And Aristotle's of course also differs from our own.“
- „In the Homeric poems a virtue is a quality the manifestation of which enables someone to do exactly what their well-defined social role requires.“
- „On Aristotle's account matters are very different. Even though some virtues are available only to certain types of people, nonetheless virtues attach not to men as

inhabiting social roles, but to man as such. It is the *telos* of man as a species which determines what human qualities are virtues. “

- „In the Homeric account the concept of a virtue is secondary to that of *a social role* , in Aristotle's account it is secondary to that of *the good life for man* conceived as the *telos* of human action and in [Franklin](#)'s much later account it is secondary to that of utility. “
- „The question can therefore now be posed directly: are we or are we not able to disentangle from these rival and various claims a unitary core concept of the virtues of which we can give a more compelling account than any of the other accounts so far? I am going to argue that we can in fact discover such a core concept and that it turns out to provide the tradition of which I have written the history with its conceptual unity. “
- „There are no less than three stages in the logical development of the concept which have to be identified in order, if the core conception of a virtue is to be understood, and each of these stages has its own conceptual background. The first stage requires a background account of what I shall call a practice, the second an account of what I have already characterized as the narrative order of a single human life and the third an account a good deal fuller than I have given up to now of what constitutes a moral tradition. Each later stage presupposes the earlier, but not *vice versa*. Each earlier stage is both modified by and reinterpreted in the light of, but also provides an essential constituent of each later stage. The progress in the development of the concept is closely related to, although it does not recapitulate in any straightforward way, the history of the tradition of which it forms the core. “