

HUME'S LAW/FORK

"A dog does not give rise to a kitten but it does not mean you cannot keep trying for a way to do it. There is something about the situation inviting you to try."

Hume redefined morality as based on the fact that we are social creatures and seek friendship. It is fellow-feeling. This is a redefinition of the word. Morality is more than that. Take Catholicism as a model being one of the highest regarded moral entities in the world. In the past, the Catholics sought friendship with one another and excluded those of other religions.

That does not fit morality as anybody understands it. Getting along with others is about you being you and is not necessarily about you keeping moral rules. Plus Catholicism teaches that you have a duty to go to Mass even if it does nothing socially for people. Plus Catholicism teaches that you have a duty to go to Mass but are not obligated to help the homeless person get a home. It believes in supererogation - that not every good deed should be done. If you are going to invent rules and make going to Mass a duty and walking past the homeless okay then you don't deserve respect. So it is the difference between regarding morality as feelings and morality as commands.

Hume considered morality in the laws and duties sense. By ought Hume means ought as in moral force and also ought as seeing something as morally beautiful and embracing it.

He applied the following to it.

Hume's Law/Fork is the declaration that all items of knowledge are either,

one, based on logic (and definitions for logic is based on a is a),

or two, based on observation.

Logic and observation cannot show that good means ought to be done or that evil means ought not to be done. Thus an is can never imply or lead to an ought.

An is cannot lead to an ought but it can attract you to one. It's only a possible indicator. It is not even a signpost but in life does that matter? No. Observation does show us that things such as feeding babies are worth treating as the best though we do not know. The best is not always the best but paradoxically it is still best to aim for it anyway. What is the alternative?

If you believe in being good, you think you observe the good consequences. But you have to admit you only see some of them and some of the seeming consequences are not really consequences of your action. You cannot see the overall picture. The problem is that observation not logic helps us see what is good. But it only helps a bit. A bit is fine.

The "an is can never imply an ought" is a universal rule. Therefore there is no hope of there being some things at least in which it is true.

Here is one violation where the idea that you have opinions is supposed to show that you have a right to your opinions!

People will always have their own opinion. There is nothing you can do about it. Even they cannot help what opinions they have. It is said you have a right to your opinion. This is based on an error. The fact that you cannot do something about the opinion somebody has for it is up to them to revise it does not mean they have a right to their opinion. You can't give people freedom to have their own opinion so they can't have a right to their own opinion.

Here are a few more examples.

We cannot say the mentally-ill killer ought not to kill. Ought does not apply when a person is not under their own control. Killing does not prove that you ought not to do it.

If our free will is an illusion, then ought is nonsense for it implies that I was not programmed to think I freely did what I did.

Morality comes from feeling. If something feels bad you cannot say this proves that you ought not to do it. Moralistic people seem to worry a lot about the moral tastes of others and they don't want to rock the boat. Why should it be about somebody else's feeling and not yours? Why would you want to deny that your feelings are as good as God's or anybody else's?

Feeling something is bad is not a justification for abstaining from it. In fact, giving in to your feelings is encouraging yourself to be weak in self-discipline. True self-discipline helps you resist your feelings.

This point horrifies people, "Even if something is evil that does not mean you ought not to do it." How do we work that out? Evil usually means forbidden so what is happening here is, "You cannot do evil for it is forbidden and we know evil exists for it is forbidden." The fork says logic cannot get you to find an ought. But this here goes beyond that and abuses logic. If such circular reasoning were any good it would mean that morality is AGAINST logic. You would then have, "You cannot get an ought from observation. Logic says there are no coherent oughts and oughts are nonsense." That is a different statement from merely saying logic and observation do not help.

Ought implies that you must do something and if you do not you must suffer punishment for you deserve it. Ought and deserving are inseparable. You cannot deny one without denying the other. Ought is based on the idea that people deserve to be treated for the best. But we have seen that those who teach this do not really believe it for they deny that those who hate the innocent deserve to be hated. So ought is based on dishonesty though it pretends to condemn dishonesty.

Ought seeks to force people to do things. That contradicts the teaching that we ought to be allowed to freely do good.

GOD

If I cannot get an ought from an is "John suffers so that suffering should be stopped and I am evil if I don't help" then that makes the universe a cold place. What do I mean? I want to get an ought from an is and often pretend I can. But I cannot. It forces me to use feelings more than my head if I use my head at all.

Even God cannot make an is become an ought. God then is unworthy of worship for he cannot do what we really need. We need an ought to be an is or vice versa more than anything.

If I cannot have an is therefore ought morality then it is worse for almighty creator God!

To create viruses and killer diseases is one thing if there is really possibly a God of love and compassion. He has to take ultimate responsibility for them. But it is another if morality is a crutch for we cannot bear the coldness we talked about. That is you hypocritically building the lie of morality on the terrible things and diseases that hurt others. To talk of God is to talk of one that is pro-hypocrisy.

Christians claim that you cannot get an ought from an is but God is the only exception. They say God is morality so if there is a God then there are moral oughts. That is totally illogical. No exceptions!

The Bible God says to look at things and judge for ourselves that they are evil. It says if we are thinking people we will discern evil. These two points oppose Hume's observation that logic and observation are not about morality therefore you cannot say

. They say it is not a fallacy to think that reason shows you morality and/or observation shows you morality. Christians try to make God the ought is that is true while otherwise it is a fallacy. That is like saying contradictions are nonsense but God is a true contradiction one that is not nonsense. Such stuff is just insane sophistry.

OUGHT IMPLIES CAN

Ought implies can. So we are told. In fact ought does more than just imply it. Ought contains it as an ingredient. Is does not lead to ought. A suffering baby does not mean you can morally help. It does not mean you can make helping the baby morally just and loving. Your intention cannot impose them on the situation no matter how loving and fair it hopes to be.

Some people say, "Surely an ought must imply an is sometime? What if a baby is being tormented to death?"

This takes us back to the coldness. No matter how great the need reality does not care.

LAST THOUGHTS: For Hume an is is one class of statement and ought is another. That is why one can happen without the other. So you cannot turn an is into an ought.

He agrees that if morality is reasonable it must consider facts such as the weather or whatever for morality is about functioning in the real world.

Morality is suspect when the alternative scares us so much. We really hate the cold! We are not moral for we want to be but because we see no choice. That is not morality.

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