Candidate 6 evidence

3 Utilitarianism is a first order, a posteriori, normative, teleological, extrinsic, experiential, subjective moral theory.
There are three principles of utilitarianism: the consequentialist principle (the idea that consequences and the outcome of a situation are what determine the action's moral worth), the hedonic principle (the idea that we should try to cause happiness and avoid pain), and the equity principle (the idea that everyone's pleasure and pain is worth the same - no one is more important than someone else).
Utilitarians say that we should

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act so that we cause the greatest amount of happiness for the most people (or the least amount of pain for the lowest amount of people). This is called the Greatest Happiness Principle. Utilitarians say we have two sovereign masters: pain and pleasure, and they are what dictate our actions - we act to cause the least pain and the most pleasure. In every scenario we should try to produce the greatest aggregate happiness and that should be prioritised over the amount of people affected. For example, it would be better to give ten people £100 than it would be to give a thousand people £1, as the people in the first scenario will

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be made more happy.

There are different ideas within Utilitarianism of how best to make moral decisions. Jeremy Bentham is an Act utilitarian (he evaluates each individual situation and chooses the course of action that results in the most happiness). He created the hedonic (or felicific) calculus that was intended to be used in situations in order to decide what to do. This calculus consists of seven components: intensity (how intense the pleasure is), duration (how long it'll last), certainty (how certain it is that the pleasure will happen), propinquity (proximity), fecundity (will it be followed by similar pleasures?), purity (will it be tarnished by

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pain?) and extent (how many people will it affect?). In any situation, a person should run their options through this calculus in order to find out which one produces the most pleasure and then that is the right thing to do. A quote from Jeremy Bentham is "pushpin is as good as poetry" meaning all pleasures are equally worthy.

John Stuart Mill, another utilitarian, has a different approach. In response to the criticism that Utilitarianism was a "pig philosophy" he created higher and lower pleasures. At first he appears to be a rule utilitarian (someone who believes that an action is right if it conforms to a rule that would maximise happiness

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if everyone followed it) but he is willing to abandon these rules if they fail to support utility, making him a two level utilitarian.

Higher pleasures are pleasures of the mind that only humans can do such as reading poetry or appreciating fine art. Lower pleasures are pleasures of the body that we share with animals such as eating and sleeping. Mill says we should always choose higher pleasures.

Competent judges are those who have experienced both higher and lower pleasures and are therefore best equipped to judge between the two. Mill says that faced with a choice between the two they would always choose higher.

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A quote from Mill is "better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied" as he believed that no one would consent to being a fool.

In this scenario, the two maxims I have decided on are maxim 1 "send the medicine to your own country" and maxim 2 "send it to more underdeveloped countries". Immediately, the equity principle must be enforced and each countries welfare should be valued equally - you can't just favour your own country just because it's yours. The consequences of maxim 1 are that people in your country would prosper but the people in the other one

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would suffer horribly, with many of them dying due to being unable to access the right treatment. Whereas the consequences of maxim 2 are that while more people in your country would catch the illness, most of them would survive due to their advanced medical care AND the people in the other country would suffer less, with more of them being able to survive the disease, saving not only their lives but the country's economy. As you can see, maxim 2 produces less pain and more happiness and everyone got treated fairly, so that would be the one to go for. However, just to be sure, we can put both maxims through the hedonic calculus.

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Maxim 1 will affect a lot of people and the pleasure will be intense, but for the other country it won't be pure as they will be in severe pain which will affect millions and have a long lasting impact on the country's people.
Maxim 2 however will have an even more intense pleasure for the people in the underdeveloped country as they will be relieved that what they thought would be imminent death is no longer a threat. It will last a long time, affect millions, is certain to happen and it won't be tarnished by any pain as the people in your own country will still likely be fine as they

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have better overall healthcare. Higher and lower pleasures are difficult to apply here as it's unclear if this situation fits into one of those categories. So, a utilitarian would say that the right thing to do would be to send the treatment to parts of the world where limited healthcare makes catching the illness more dangerous rather than your own country.

One strength of utilitarianism is that it is intuitive and reflects how we naturally think. Most people act to cause pleasure and avoid pain. So, in this situation where the option of sending medicine to your own country would only cause more pain overall, it is instinctual to avoid doing that and

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go for the option that would instead create more happiness. One criticism of utilitarianism is the trouble of predicting consequences. The consequences of an action determine whether it is right or wrong. But what happens when you predict that something good will happen and instead something horrible does? For instance, I predicted that in sending the medicine to the underdeveloped country less people would die. But what if the disease still has a fatal effect on the population of your own country? You thought you were saving everyone but really you were just condemning your own country to death and ruin. Additionally, it is never stated what

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kind of consequences, to focus on long term or short term? Human or financial? For example, in this scenario should I prioritise saving more lives or saving country's economys? It isn't clear, making the possibilities of what to do endless and confusing.

And what about taking personal relationships into account? Saving a bunch of random people instead of your own family and friends is difficult to do and makes this theory slightly detached. What if you had family in your own country? You'd be more inclined to save them rather than strangers living elsewhere but utilitarianism requires you to be cold and distance yourself from

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these emotions, a very hard and unnatural thing to do. There is also the issue of tyranny of majority. If the goal is to make the most people happy then that means the minority will never get their way which seems unfair. What if your country had a greater population than the underdeveloped one? Would it be alright to sacrifice the welbeing of the suffering minority so you could appease the more privileged majority? Most would say no but that's how utilitarianism works and it's not fair.

Lastly there is the question of whether pleasure and pain are the only worthwhile motivators. Aren't friendship, love and duty also

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motivations that should be considered? Would it be so horrible for you to give the medicine to your own country because you were acting out of duty to your homeland or love for your family there? Doesn't it make us more animalistic and less intellectual if all we are doing is seeking out pleasure and avoiding pain?

In conclusion, Utilitarianism is an intuitive yet demanding moral theory which asks us to treat each other equally and aim to produce happiness. While it is a good ideal to have, it is too impossible to live up to and should be strived after as an ideal.

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4. Utilitarianism is a moral theory, first propounded in its modern form by Jeremy Bentham, which claims that the right action in any situation is that which will lead to the greatest happiness for the greatest number. It has been subject to many criticisms, one of which is the claim that it is difficult to apply in real life.

The theory is founded on the greatest happiness principle as stated above. This comes from three underlying principles: the consequentialist principle, that the morality of an action is dependent solely on its consequences; the hedonic principle, that the only morally relevant consequences of an action are the pleasure and pain caused by it; and the equity principle, that different individuals' equal pain/pleasure is of equal moral weight. *Utilitarians think that these three principles lead to the GHP: the right action is that which causes the greatest happiness for the greatest number.

The Utilitarian method of making

*Bentham's school of

Candidate 2 evidence