

Block VIII Videos 40 through 46 (Ethics)

Introduction: This is the final block of the series, and it is here that the socialist agenda becomes apparent. As I said before (**Topic I.A.3**), Hank will never come right out and admit he is pushing a socialist agenda, but what is taught in this block proves he is. We have seen similar examples before, with **Topic II.F.6.iv** highlighting a particularly scary example of it. In this block, the only veil left that socialism can hide behind is to not call it by name. Seeking to reward those who do not perform (**video 40**), blindly ignoring reasons why someone won't be hired except for race or gender (**video 41**), arguing that animals have a stronger claim to personhood (**video 42**) than unborn babies (**video 45**), the special affection one has for family but not for strangers is wrong (**video 43**), that we should risk losing our own national identity to help others (**video 44**) and that we should be content with an absurd life (**video 46**) are not just socialist ideas, they are the heart and soul of socialism.

Except for Robert Nozic, almost every "philosopher" presented here is an avowed atheist, and most publicly pursue socialist agendas. Peter Singer (whom I discussed before, most notably in **Topics II.D.6** and **II.F.5.ii.e**) completely dominates this block, getting more attention here than any other philosopher in the series except for Aristotle and Saint Aquinas. But while Saint Aquinas has been ruthlessly challenged the whole time, Singer is taken at his word.

In my opinion, **video 41** is the only place where a discussion of the legitimate merits of opposing points of view are discussed, but even then the conservative argument is not as strong as it should be. Nozic is used as the interlocutor in this and other videos of the block, but his arguments are marginalized to the point of making him seem more insensitive than intelligent.

A) What is Love?: Amazingly enough, I think the one thing necessary to understand in this block is the concept of love. I do not know if Crash Course Psychology or other series covered this topic, but the thing one needs to know to understand the various issues here is love. Human dignity (**Topic III.A.4**) and the seven virtues (**Topic VII.B**) are likewise important when discussing this block. So, before I get into the videos themselves, let us talk about what love is. There are four types of love, all of which are relevant to this block. All four loves require some kind of connection to exist. This should not be surprising, as love is a unifying force.

1) Philia: The love that brings unity through friendship. Many say this is the love of "brotherhood." This love is often mistaken to mean "love of brothers," and therefore familial love. And, certainly, philia has its place in the family, but I will talk more about that in a moment. Friends are people who have deep, passionate interests in common with each other. Philia is an exclusive club of people with a high degree of like-mindedness. This is in opposition to mere acquaintances, with whom we might have common interests but not at a deep level (they fall under storge). It is a love where the beloved must also be the lover. The very nature of family (living in close proximity, relying on each other and doing things together) makes for very fertile ground for philia, as well as the other loves.

2) Storge: The love that brings unity through familiarity. It is the love of affection. This love is based on a common history. Storge finds fertile ground to grow in families as they spend a lot of time together. But unlike philia, storge does not require the beloved to return the affection. This is why we can truthfully say we love an animal we never met personally (such as Cecil in **video 42**), a doll, a house, a memento (such as Hank's coffee cup in **video 18**), etc. It also is why some people still feel attached to parents that may have been neglectful or even abusive.

3) Eros: The love that brings unity through passion. These feelings need not be pleasant either. The opposite of love is not hate, it is indifference. This is why those who say they hate someone are still emotionally attached to that person. Like storge, eros may or may not be one-way, and it may be able to keep a dysfunctional family bonded together. It is fickle but can be strongly influenced by both philia and storge.

4) Agape: The love that brings unity through charity (**Topic VII.B.1.iii**). It is by definition one-way; the lover cannot also be the beloved. It is the most unique of all the loves. All three of the others involve the beloved having something of value for the lover (even if that value is actually destructive in nature). Agape, however, is given with no expectation of receiving anything back. It is not rational, as there is no rational reason for one to love something that cannot benefit oneself. It therefore cannot be discovered by reason; it must be taught. This is the love that keeps all healthy relationships together when things go wrong. We do indeed need to show love to those we don't know, but agape is the only type of love where this is possible.

B) Capitalism as an Alternative: Capitalism can, and sometimes does, go against Christian perspectives (people can be looked at as "resources" and therefore their human dignity becomes secondary to "the bottom line"), but it is the only socioeconomic system that comes close to Christian ideals. Where Christianity believes one should "be the best version of oneself," capitalism promotes a "work hard and intelligently and one will succeed" ethos. Indeed, nearly every "problem" capitalism is accused of having is not really capitalism to begin with. Using wealth to influence government officials to hinder or even eliminate competition, or to endorse a "too big to fail" campaign to take taxpayer's money, etc., is *not* capitalism; it is socialism for the wealthy.

C) Video Block VIII (Ethics): These videos attempt to build on **Block VII (Morality)**, but do so without grounding it in Jehovah (or any other deity). Even Aristotle's Virtue Theory (**video 38**) is strangely missing here. The ultimate question such a grounding answers is "Why should I behave in an ethical way?" If it is grounded in a pagan deity, then the answer is because of divine retribution. If it is grounded in Jehovah, then from the faith and hope of the ultimate reward. But if it is grounded in atheism, then the only possible motivation is to avoid punishment under the law. This was touched on but never developed in **Block VII (Morality)**.

1) Video 40 (What is Justice?): We see here the only hint of using socialism as a ground for ethics: "...and this is an incredibly important topic, because a lot of what we argue about *politically* has to do exactly with this issue." (min 5:18, italics mine) The door to politics has now been formally opened.

There seems to be an assumption that "justice" needs to have one and only one possible meaning, that the word can't be used in the context of a particular situation. This is an extreme rationalistic attitude that defies what we know about words (**Block VI**) as a whole. Despite coming up with many different ideas of what "justice" is, everything in the first half of the video comes back to commercial materialism, which is a fancy name for greed. If one listens closely, one can see just how quickly all the different forms of economic and social justice shown here quickly devolve into attaining material things for oneself. The only theory here that suggests giving up greed (Need-Based Justice) was quickly shot down on grounds that people should have a right to be greedy.

Nonetheless, this video is perhaps useful as a means of forcing us to discuss cancerous ideas before they spread, and it did do a good job explaining certain realities. Despite having a clearly socialist flavor, this video is still redeemable if used in isolation of the rest of the block.

i) Classical Justice: This claims one's role in society is the defining factor for what justice looks like. But so much depends on what society expects one to do. In a free country, laws are kept at a minimum and individuals are called to examine themselves on how best to be productive members. This is both the Christian and Aristotelian view. In a socialist country, those that make the laws determine what one's worth (if any) is to society, as well as how to punish those it decides do not support the collective good.

Compare the Christian virtue of justice (**Topic VII.B.2.ii**), which is to give all people their proper due. Here is where the biggest gap between Christianity and socialism comes into play. Christianity still recognizes the unique human dignity that all people have. In other words, while generalizations can certainly be made, we are still subtly reminded that we are all individuals. Except for Need-Based Justice and Nozic's comments, every theory described in this video bases justice on interchangeability: what is good for one must also be good for everyone else. I have already pointed out some problems with this on Utilitarianism (**video 36**, which is mentioned in this video), but I will speak at length on these problems in the remaining videos, most notably in **videos 41** and **44**.

ii) Distributive Justice: This will likewise be commented on at length in **video 44**.

iii) Justice by Equality: This is the essence of socialism. We lose our individuality as equality must needs be based on interchangeability.

iv) Need-Based Justice: This has some merit, but as a political platform it is highly toxic. As any parent who walked by the toy section of Wal Mart can attest to, a "want" quickly turns into a "need" if that is the path to getting it. If some doctor claims that psychological trauma can happen by "repressing" a particular desire, then a "want" has medically become a "need."

v) Merit Based Justice: This is just the political equivalent of Moral Luck (last video), so it has the same failings (favoritism, tyranny, etc.).

vi) John Rawls: His idea of addressing equality actually contradicts itself. If a system is designed to "...favor those least well-off." (min 3:10), then we have an infinite loop of creating laws to give privilege to the underprivileged. Any such law automatically creates a new privileged class at the expense of those not included in it. True equality should favor nobody. This is an example of extreme rationalism at its worst, yet this self-contradictory idea is endorsed for the rest of the block. This piece of nonsense is an emotional appeal (guilt for those that are "privileged," and resentment for those who are not) and should not have any place in a rational discussion. While Hank does claim there are some problems with it, he downplays them. Would Hank be as disinterested in these "problems" if he, as a college professor in the United States, were required to get the same salary as an elementary school teacher in a third world county on grounds that they are less well off than he is?

vii) Thought Bubble: All that being said, we see a rare example of a Thought Bubble that actually teaches what it was intended to *and* does so with competence. Still, we find Nozic suffering a cheap shot at the end of it: "...while other people go hungry, well, that's not Wilt's fault." (min 5:03) This flippant remark is very unprofessional. If Wilt made less money, would there be even one less starving child in the world? Hank is making a classic *non sequitur* (does not follow) fallacy here. Just because the money would be theoretically available if Wilt refused it, it doesn't follow that children will now be fed. I also would like to know if Hank is being hypocritical here. Would Hank be willing to make this (and other) series for free instead of being sponsored by PBS and Squarespace so said companies could feed the world? This is a classic example of being careful of how one judges another

lest one's own words be used against oneself.

viii) Begging the Question: At 6:28, Hank points out that because taxes go to welfare, then that proves that justice means we have an obligation to provide some services to others less fortunate to us. He is basically saying: since our tax money already goes to help those with less money, it must therefore be the right thing to do. This is perhaps the most clear-cut example one will ever see when it comes to the "begging the question" (**video 9**) fallacy. Not only that, but this is also an example of the is-ought fallacy he called out in **video 34**. Just because tax money *is* going to the poor does not mean it *ought* to.

ix) Legal Justice: We spend the last third of the video here, and well we should. Justice demands that those who harm others be removed from the rest of society. But none of the ideas presented here are workable. When all is said and done, there are three forms criminal justice can take: punitive, rehabilitative and preventative. All three are addressed (by other names) here, and all three explanations are lacking.

a) Criminal Justice: This is, foremost, punitive in nature. This is not to say that rehabilitative and preventative goals are not laudable, but rather that they need to be of secondary importance. I do not care to discuss how this justice manifests itself (retributive and restorative both have their place), only that the accused needs to be deserving of what is given to him. If we can justify rewards for those who excel, then we can also approve of punishment for those who fail.

b) Rehabilitation: Trying to prevent convicted criminals from committing future crimes can and should go hand-in-hand with the punitive aspect of legal justice when possible. But the idea of Welfare Maximization, which seeks to *replace* the punitive aspect, is fundamentally flawed and dangerous beyond what most people think.

If the main focus of legal justice is to rehabilitate the criminal, then the best we can hope for is the coddling of criminals as Hank suggested. But, again, he shined a positive light on this heinous practice. In the case of rehabilitation, we are no longer dealing with a crime, but a mental disorder of some type. This makes it a highly technical matter needing a specialist to handle it. We must therefore replace the layman jury with a medical expert in deciding the fate of the accused. By doing so, the idea of a criminal getting what they deserve is replaced by whatever therapy the medical personnel decides to experiment with. Historically, frontal lobotomies, electric shock treatments, vivisections, experimental drugs and other horrific practices have all been done in the name of "rehabilitation." If this seems archaic, it is only because sometime in the past, the common people got involved and forced their representatives to reform the sanitariums of old, as the medical profession failed miserably to police its own people.

Furthermore, as the medical center treating the "patient" is likely to be paid by the state based on how many "clients" they have, there is little incentive for a patient to ever be declared "cured." Finally, as all crimes are ultimately come from decisions made in the mind, *any* activity claimed to be abnormal (such as watching cartoons past a certain age or believing in Jehovah) can be considered a "crime." This is not a preposterous "what if" scenario I have made up: remember in **video 14** how W.K. Clifford claimed religion is "epistemically irresponsible" and "one long sin against mankind," which was echoed by Hank in **video 15**. While I hope it never bears fruit, the seeds of criminalizing religion have been planted in this series, and "rehabilitation" is a logical consequence of it.

c) Determent: If the main focus of legal justice is as a deterrent, then we will make an

already bad problem even worse. With deterrence, it does not matter if the accused is actually innocent or guilty, only that the public gets the idea that a particular crime will not go unpunished. Mob rule will replace any sense of fairness, and courtroom decisions will merely be glorified lynchings. Even though our current system is designed to minimize this problem, it is not hard to find examples of innocents being found guilty of crimes and being exonerated later. If we create a system designed to promote deterrence, the number of false convictions can only get worse.

d) Restorative Justice: While I already addressed Restorative Justice as a companion to Retributive Justice, I find it ironic that the philosophers came full circle to a punishment they previously despised. To begin with, the criminal needs to always replace more than he destroyed. If, for the sake of having numbers for comparison, a child thinks he can spoil five walls with graffiti before he gets caught, then he probably thinks he has a 80% success rate if he only has to clean the one he was caught for. He is therefore likely to continue. But if he has to clean seven walls, then he might get the idea that he is on the losing end of this deal and be encouraged to stop. Secondly, Restorative Justice as presented here is not always fair. If it comes down to simply being able to pay for damages, then does not this system place a greater burden on the poor and disenfranchised than on the rich (a practice rejected in the next video)?

But Restorative Justice is also one of the socialist terms that mean something quite different than what they advertise it to be. In socialism, it is not enough for one to make reparations for something they did, one must make reparations for what their ancestors did as well. And with no means as to measure what is a fair reparation. In Historical Based Justice (**Topic C.2.v**), we see this socialist idea being explicitly promoted.

x) Parting Shot: The "an eye for an eye" as a "good, old fashioned, Biblical, ... Justice" (min 7:01) was just as much a cheap shot against Judaism and Christianity as was the trite remark about Wilt making money while others starved. Yet again, Hank shows his contempt for a theory he clearly knows nothing about. While those words are in the Bible, they are taken out of context here. There was a time when entire extended families (including servants) could be killed for some slight one made against another. The famous "eye for an eye" commandment from Exodus 21:23-25 was rather radical in its time, as it limited how much revenge could be exacted for a single event. Far from being barbaric, such laws were the beginning of the humane society we take for granted today. And Jehovah didn't stop there. We see time and time again that forgiveness, mercy and understanding is what Jehovah asks of His followers, and the New Testament explicitly rejected the "eye for an eye" mentality (Matthew 5:38-41). Also, I would deny that capital punishment is primarily about "revenge," but rather about protecting the community at large from an extremely dangerous person.

2) Video 41 (Discrimination): This video does do a good job presenting how complex the matter of discrimination really is, but it goes in circles and offers really bad solutions. Even so, it is the last video of this series that is in any way sane. Hank speaks of Plato and a call for reason (min 0:47), yet nearly the whole video is emotion based. There is only a short break for reason at about min 6:11. At this time, Hank basically admits his emotional bias by saying that discrimination is primarily driven by fear. Even this respite is deceiving, as the prevailing emotions this video seeks to encourage are pity and outrage.

There is no rational thought presented concerning any issue here. This is a nine minute long example of what would be called "leading the witness" in a court of law. Only once is Nozick given a chance to speak, and then he is quickly ignored.

i) Basis for Morality: At min 1:07, we are told "morality demands that individuals, acts, or states of affairs that are the same should be treated the same." Which type of morality says so? Determinism has no say whatsoever. Evolutionism would in some specific cases, but this is a far cry from "demand" (remember Singer's approved of the Nazi extermination of Jews and other undesirables (**Topic II.F.5.ii.d**)). Likewise, paganism might show something like this now and then, but the gods themselves are notorious for choosing favorites. This type of morality Hank is talking about only exists in Christianity. But by denying Jehovah earlier in the series, Christian teachings are greatly perverted here. So, what we see in this video is how patriarchy has cherry-picked Christian ideas and twisted them for its own purpose.

ii) Socialist Agenda: At min 5:25, Hank says "If we are actually aiming for equality, that's exactly what the people at the front are going to have to do." All the pretense of qualifications, competence and effectiveness are gone. I could not have asked for a better piece of evidence showing that the socialist agenda is being encouraged here.

iii) Human Dignity: While the video does talk about changing people's perspectives so as to respect the human dignity of others, it suffers from not accepting the idea that those we seek to change also have human dignity of their own (the virtue justice, **Topic VII.B.2.ii**). If we deny human dignity to the worst of us, then it will quickly be denied to all. We actually see this happening here, as every solution offered involves forcing others to abide by a certain standard as a means to "educate" those that engage in discriminatory behavior. The Christian solution is quite the opposite: educate people so such laws are not necessary.

iv) Case Studies: Now, let's look at each of the four examples that were reiterated throughout the video. In every case, a socialist answer to the problem is implied (the manager *should* be required to hire the woman because she is a woman, the patient *should* see a doctor she doesn't feel comfortable with, the bakers *should* make cakes that offend their sensibilities and the restaurant owner *should* hire black waiters). One may say that Hank is only trying to point out how decisions can be inconsistent, but this is only true for two of the four examples: the woman seeing a doctor and the bakers choosing customers. In all four cases, it is implied that we cannot trust people to do the right thing, so something should be done to compel them to do so. The restaurant example not only explicitly states this, but goes so far as to say it is also for the good of the customers.

a) The Bakery: Whenever a store turns away business, it creates a demand. Furthermore, if those turned away can convince others to go someplace else because they felt they were treated unfairly, then this demand can grow exponentially. This demand opens an opportunity for a new business to open. Hank claims that this is not possible because those in power will not allow new businesses to open (min 3:41). While exaggerated, he does have a point here. I agree that big business should not be allowed to influence lawmakers to discourage competition. But discouraging competition is *exactly* what this video endorses by suggesting the owners should be made to accept all customers. If we want our businesses to be managed by people who share our outlook on life, then it is counterproductive to force those who don't to take on even more business. Rather than seek to make the culture more socialistic, it would be better to ensure the government does more to promote true competition.

b) The Gynecologist: A woman should not be forced to see *any* particular doctor if he or she makes the woman feel uncomfortable. If she is willing to visit a doctor who may be less qualified, yet is one she is comfortable with, then that should be her call, not anyone else's. And this has long range consequences not discussed here. Too many people are victims of abuse, or allowed

loved ones to become abused by professionals, because they did not trust their instincts. What if the woman feels the doctor (regardless of race or gender) has taken improper liberties in the examination? Will she be allowed a day in court to present her case, or will her history of "sexism and/or racism" suggest that it was "all in her head?"

c) The Restaurant: Hank has presented a very perverted idea of what really happened historically. Having black servers in a previously all white restaurant did nothing to reeducate people. Blacks have traditionally been looked at by the white elite as "the help." Perhaps there are some ultra elites who think themselves so "evolved" that "the help" should likewise be superior to what the "commoners" have. But forcing them to "downgrade" to the more traditional type of "help" does nothing to change their views about blacks; it just gives them something new to complain about.

d) The New Hire: In this video, we are led to assume that the woman was just as good as the man and that her sex was the tiebreaker. I have no problem with this as implied, as the manager has to succeed or fail based on his decision. But this is another example of deceitfulness. The employment laws do not force a manager to pick a woman (or any other minority) over white males in case of equal qualifications, or even if close to equal. What they do is force a manager to hire a given minority as long as a) the company is below desired government goals for the given minority and b) the minority meets minimum qualifications. This practice hurts businesses when they have to turn away superior applicants, and it encourages mediocrity in the minorities the laws claim to help. These laws mean minorities need not drive themselves to be the best they can be, they only need to be good enough to meet minimum standards (which tend to be rather low to begin with). Furthermore, there is more to a job than just having a skill set. Attitude plays a big part. An employer should be allowed to turn away any employee who, regardless of credentials, would cause more harm to the business than good.

v) Historically-Based Justice: This model is based on a bankrupt idea as mentioned in the last video. What Judith Jarvis Thomson said here is just a rewording of what was said by Rawls (**Topic C.1.vi**). Nozick offers the voice of reason once again and, like in the last video, is presented in a way to make him look uncaring. Only this time, Hank's counter-argument against Nozick is outright deceitful. There is no such thing as white privilege in the contemporary United States, especially for white males. There are no scholarships exclusively for men or for whites. There are no schools who cater to whites or males only. With the two exceptions of pre-high school education and nursing, there is no industry where a male of any color gets preferential hiring treatment to satisfy the various EEO laws. Furthermore, of all the ethnic classes in the United States, native-born whites are actually the second least successful group. Only native-born blacks are less successful than native-born whites. Demands to meet or to exceed whites is truly a modest goal. What Hank argued at min 5:07 is simply wrong, and is a perfect example of how the socialist agenda is being pushed in education today, in this case the agenda of making the white male feel guilty for simply being a white male. A white male fresh out of college has not reaped any benefits that non-white males need to catch up on.

vi) Social Liberation: For those who think the socialist agenda is liberating, consider the argument at min 3:41 suggesting that the problem with letting stores decide their own discrimination policies is that they hold all the power. I believe even the most rudimentary contemplation on this should show how flawed it really is. A single store (and all the examples given in the video have all the appearances of being "small business") in any settlement of any size will have lots of competition. How much power does this one store really have? Are we to assume that they can not only turn certain people away, but they can also somehow prevent these same people from going to their competition?

Now let's look at what was said shortly after "...reigning in the freedom to discriminate." (min 4:03) The only way a freedom can be taken away is by law (which is why certain freedoms were protected by the Constitution of the United States, as no law can transcend the Constitution). This means giving control to a small group of people (the law makers). But, unlike a local small business, lawmakers have no competition. There is no alternative if one finds the legal discrimination morally deplorable.

vii) Forced Integration: To suggest that the way to get people to overcome the discomfort they feel with other groups is to force them to be together (min 6:16) is wrong. All this does is build even more resentment. In a classic example of man's basic inhumanity, there are those who find sport in tying two cats together by the tail, then hanging them over a rail. As both are in excruciating pain and in such close proximity to each other, they naturally assume the other is the cause of their suffering and they fight until one is killed. What Hank proposed here is the social equivalent of this. Education is proven to be quite successful in disarming irrational emotions, booming economies are proven to curb racial tensions, and volunteer-based activities (such as sports and charity groups) are proven to build mutual respect.

3) Video 42 (Non-Human Animals): To make things clear, the realities of animal cruelty are a legitimate concern, but arbitrary cruelty is not the heart of why animals are used the way they are. Hank is using emotion (guilt) to blend two distinct but related topics together that need to be discussed separately. For simplicity, I will use the term "animals" to mean "non-human animals."

I find that the idea of personhood, which has played such an important role in this series, is curiously absent here. Not once is personhood used to explain what separates man from animals. I have to wonder why, as **Block IV** suggested over and over again that personhood is not something all humans have.

i) Dignity: Humans have dignity and animals have dignity, but human dignity is superior to animal dignity, and there is a hierarchy of dignities among the animals as well. By having dominion over all animals, humans can choose which animals to eat, which ones to put to work, and which ones to domesticate. For humans to have dominion over animals means humans decide what animals do. If we must be consistent in the treatment of animals, then we really don't have dominion over them, some higher power does (something this series strongly denies). But even if we go along with this idea, we find contradictions.

a) Prudence: If we hold prudence (**Topic VII.B.2.i**) to be of concern (and Hank did quote from utilitarians Singer and Jeremy Bentham in this video), then our choices should *not* be consistently applied in all cases, but rather based on the circumstances in question. Hank actually seems to agree with this in extreme cases (it's okay to eat an animal if you would starve to death otherwise) but not in the mundane. But I should not be expected to let a feral cat into my house just because I let a tame one in. Also, I should not be expected to encourage people to ride zebras (who resist domestication) when more easily trained horses are available. While some cultures may treat a particular animal one way and other cultures treat the same animal another way, in the end the use almost always comes down to a rational application of how the animal's accidentals (**Topic IV.A**) benefit man. If one culture places value on one particular accidental while another culture values some other accidental of the same animal, then it is the human's right of dominion that allows each culture to choose differently.

b) Right of Dominion: That being understood, we can now move to the second topic properly. While the dignity of humans justifies our dominion over other animals, it must also be

remembered that the animals still have their own dignities. With authority comes responsibility, so our authority over animals means we must also treat them responsibly and in accordance to their own dignities. The fact that many humans do not respect the dignity of animals means that they, at least, do not deserve the authority they have. And this seems to be the crux of the whole issue here. But just because a few humans abuse their authority does not discredit the authority the human species has.

ii) Socialist Answer: To decide that since there are those who don't deserve authority, we should strip all humans of their authority is quite socialist: if one cannot make everyone equally "good," then one will make everyone equally impotent. In the previous video, we saw a push to create laws regulating human behavior to force them to learn their errors, but here we don't even see an attempt for education; just a straight up prohibition. To give up our dominion over animals will not solve the problem; it will only add to it. Human dominion is part of the natural order, whether one believes in God or not. If we do not exercise it, then a gap will open up and the void will need to be filled. I do not pretend to know what will fill this gap, but in any case humans will be obsolete as we no longer fill the role we were intended to fill.

iii) Major Inconsistency in Applying Ethics: While not really germane to the topics at hand, Hank brought up the apparent "inconsistency" on why we treat some animals like humans but not others. What Hank apparently does not understand is the love called *storge* (**Topic A.2**). When there is public outrage against the killing of certain random animals (such as Cecil), it is not really a random event. The public was made aware of Cecil as a specific animal (which almost always happens when an animal is given a name) and knew of him before his death. There was a connection between Cecil and the general public. A certain degree of familiarity existed among many people concerning Cecil. He wasn't just any animal, he was a beloved animal. Likewise, certain animal species are beloved as a whole because of routine connections with them: bunnies, teddy bears, felines, canines, etc. These animals are associated with certain pleasant traits we grew to have affection for, and so similar animals automatically have a certain degree of familiarity about them. In contrast, the bacon on one's plate creates no sense of familiarity with the animal that it came from because the concept of bacon is too different than the concept of a pig as a whole, living animal.

I agree that these are emotional arguments, but they are still rational and appropriate because we are using love in its proper context. Hank, in contrast, is dictating what emotions one *should* feel, ignoring *how* one does feel. He is overlooking the connection one needs to have for any type of love to exist. He is shaming people for not feeling what they are incapable of feeling. There is no point in shaming someone for burying a cat like a human because that cat probably had a stronger connection to the owners than with many of their close relatives.

This is a case where the philosophers "can't see the forest for the trees." They are so busy pursuing their own ideas of how animals should be treated, that they failed to see what is actually going on with the animals. This is why Carl Cohen came across as being heartless despite recognizing the proper order of things in nature.

It is also why socialistic solutions cannot work. Love of any kind must be freely given, one cannot regulate it. Regulating animal treatment may be prudent to some degree, but it must never be confused with actually fixing the bigger problem. Indeed, laws are anathema to prudence, as laws remove options that may occasionally be preferable.

iv) Pain and Suffering: While I do not have an argument to *prohibit* actions on animals that cannot feel pain, I still consider it a toxic idea. In the best of circumstances, there is still

the possibility that animals without brains might still feel pain. At worst, practitioners may grow numb (or may already be so) to what they do to non-feeling animals and, by degrees, move onto animals that can feel. There is no evil so heinous that decent people can't talk themselves into doing it, as the failed socialist experiments have shown all too clearly. In my opinion, any invasive experiment on an animal should be a grave and solemn affair, a rare exception when all other possibilities have been exhausted yet a real need for answers remains.

v) Hypocrisy: What I have to say next actually connects this video with a later one (**video 45**). I was torn between discussing it here or waiting until then. But the words Hank said that brought this matter to my attention were spoken here, and I still have a lot of other material for that video, so here it goes.

Hank has often told the audience that we should have rational reasons for what we believe. A couple times he even mocked those who have "irrational" beliefs (particularly with religion). But this is the only time in the whole series where he implies one should actually be excluded from the discussion for such beliefs: "So, if you are saying that reasons don't matter - that you can do just what you want even if your actions are internally inconsistent, then not only are you not doing philosophy, well, you're sort of opting out of rational discourse altogether." (min 8:22). Less than 30 seconds earlier, he said, "Well, the thing is: Philosophers want you to be consistent with your beliefs." (min 8:01).

About 1 million abortions took place in the U.S. each year before the Dobbs Decision. The preferred method is to rip them apart. Ultrasound videos clearly show the victim is in great distress as it is being killed. Yet neither here nor in **video 45** is this mentioned. Why are we being inconsistent in the matter of pain as a moral consideration?

One might suggest that it is not discussed here because this is about non-human animals, and aborted children are human (by virtue of DNA, **video 19**). Well, there is a problem with this as well. Calling unborn children human makes most of this video meaningless. The essence of this video was about how wrong it is for humans to be privileged over animals (a claim Singer made explicit). But we are just as cruel to the unborn of our own kind as we are to animals. We find no privilege based on species. I could possibly expand this to include heinous crimes and war atrocities (such as the Nazi persecution of Jews and other undesirables), but an interlocutor could argue back that those are outlawed and therefore beside the point. But abortion is legal in every developed nation in the world, and at least one (China) recently had laws mandating abortions.

I find it quite interesting that Singer is presented in the video as questioning if future generations will look back at us and claim we are barbarians for how we treat animals. Hank even dared to compare our treatment of animals to how slaves in this country were once treated (min 4:42). I find it much more credible to believe that future generations will be more appalled by how we treated our own unborn children than how we treated animals. Perhaps we live in the age that will be later known as the "Children's Holocaust."

4) video 43 (Family Obligations): I am amused that Hank brings up the concept of "love" here. While this video dealt with love even before he used that word, nothing in this video or in previous videos gives us an indication as to what he thinks love means. As a result, we get conflicting signals here as he moves from one form of love to another.

I had a feeling this video was going to be bad when Hank had to say "Let's hear her out" (min 0:22) concerning Jane English's idea. Of course, not once in the seven videos dedicated to the concept

of God in **Block II**, or in the few cameos of religion since then, has Hank said "Let's hear Jehovah out" about an idea he was uncomfortable with. But let us get past sour grapes and see just what this video is about.

i) Debt: Of course, familial relationship should not be based on the concept of "debt." This would be a truly scary idea. If I make a paper flower out of a newspaper I paid for, do I not have the right to take a match and burn it? After all, the paper flower owes its form to me. Is not its fate in my hands? To reduce a child to such a situation is truly disgusting. Yet, when it comes to abortion, this is exactly the logic people use (more on that in **video 45**). The only consistent and logical answer as to why we can burn a paper flower but not a child is because the child has a dignity that, if properly respected, would protect it. The paper flower has no such dignity.

A parent is owed the respect from the dignity they have by being a parent. This is not a "blank check" however, as the child has dignity as well. Remember, the virtue of justice demands *all* dignity be respected, which includes both child and parent. If the parent is dangerous to the child, then the dignity of the child demands protective measures be taken. The dignity of a grown child allows him the right to free will, of which being a parent cannot override.

ii) Love: Although many of the videos in this block center on the concept of "love," this video actually uses the word a lot. It is fairly obvious how equivocal Hank is in using the word in this video. English's idea of "friendship" actually matches my discussion of *philia*. But it is easy to see how *philia* is not enough. A healthy family will show all four loves, not just one.

iii) Pay the Piper: Towards the end of the video, Hank tells us that we might have noticed that, for the first time, we now speak of close and personal matters instead of cold, hard reason. I say it is *because* we have avoided the realities that mere reason finds so easy to ignore. This is also likely the reason why *agape* is so misunderstood here. Since the series has endorsed extreme rationalism as opposed to empiricism, we now see the series struggling to deal with the reality of human relations. The outrageous thought experiments used to demonstrate obscure and abstract ideas are useless when talking about the everyday reality of having a family. Perhaps, had the series considered the concept of human dignity before, discussing this matter would not have been so awkward now. As it is, none of the first three choices on how to look at a family relationship include the concept of human dignity.

iv) Contractarianism: I find the justification of English's idea through Contractarianism to be quite hypocritical. Contractarianism clearly and explicitly stated that we are held to social contracts as long as we likewise benefit from them (**video 37**). No provision was made on this matter: all that matters is that a person is an end in itself. It is argued in here, however, that children are irrational and therefore cannot enter into a contract. Non-human animal rights were championed by Hank in the last video for essentially the same reason, yet no such defense will be given for unborn children in **video 45**. What we are seeing in these three videos is an arbitrary application of who is and who isn't protected by the code of ethics being discussed. Consider Hank's own words at the end of the last video: "So, if you are saying that reasons don't matter - that you can do just what you want *even if your actions are internally inconsistent*, then not only are you not doing philosophy, well, you're sort of opting out of rational discourse altogether." (min 8:22, italics mine).

v) Thought Bubble: Every parent should be terrified of the Thought Bubble. Mandatory sterilization was briefly tried in this country once and sparked much public outrage. There are those who claim Hitler got his Final Solution idea from this practice (something I personally

disagree with, but it nonetheless demonstrates my point of just how toxic this idea is). This logic was also used once in our country's history to determine who could and couldn't vote, and was universally condemned as being racist. Blacks constitute 13% of this country's population (Census Bureau), but they commit 50% of the crimes (Department of Justice). Let's not forget that the poor education and poorer quality of life most blacks have are quite popular in today's news. Will not this test therefore prevent a disproportionate number of blacks from having children?

But, for the sake of argument, let us assume that the absurd happens and that the test itself is fair, just, and without controversy. Are we prepared to add otherwise productive members of society into our already crowded jail system when they violate this law? Are the interests of these illegally born children best served by taking them away from their parents? Or will we abort these postnatal "fetuses" as we find them? Will we overcrowd the clinics with legally mandated sterilization procedures and thus force those with serious and/or painful medical conditions to have to compete against them? Who will pay for these procedures, the tax payers? Even in this scenario, we still have to consider jailing those who attempt to bypass the laws. Or will violators only have to pay a fine? This, of course, will create even more social tension as fines are not a big deal to the rich who can better afford them.

vi) Parting Shots: I would like to begin by briefly revisiting the whole concept behind the Thought Bubble. Although government organizations as a whole are not well respected by the general public, is there any service, other than the IRS, with a lower reputation than the Department of Social Services (or whatever a particular state calls it)? For DSS to be able to improve the life of a child by putting him in their system, the child's life must either be in imminent jeopardy and/or already be in the most wretched state possible. Do we really want an organization which establishes such low goals for itself, and fails to meet them, "teaching" would-be parents how best to raise their children? I would argue that the future children would be much better off if the would-be parents volunteered to help at the local zoo and were able to observe how primates care for their young.

Remember that the one "religious" idea Hank didn't have a serious issue with was Natural Law Theory (**video 34**). He seemed quite supportive of its secular equivalent, Virtue Theory (**video 38**). Both theories support the idea that reproduction is what humans are supposed to do. To suggest legal sterilization (in this video) or abortion (**video 45**) is contrary to the only two moral codes presented in the series that didn't have strong arguments made against them. The family, for better or for worse, is the most fundamental social unit there is. All greater levels of society are built upon the foundation that the family has laid. If the family is weakened or destroyed, so too will be the higher levels of society.

5) Video 44 (Poverty & Our Response To It): This video deals with an incredibly complex problem and assumes an incredibly simple solution is possible. There is simply no way to rationally talk about this video without bringing outside thoughts in because nothing in the entire series has laid any groundwork for this. To compound the problem, we spend more time talking about psychology and politics in the video than true philosophy. I have claimed that Hank was pushing a socialist agenda many times already. In this video, he outright endorses the One World Government in all but name: "Morality calls for us to not draw arbitrary lines when it comes to who deserves help and who doesn't. A lot of people, like [Peter] Singer, think that the only non-arbitrary line is to say that there's really only one boat, and we're all in it, so we've all got to help. Everyone." (min 7:46) While this by itself is Singer and not necessarily Hank endorsing the One World Government, don't forget that Hank said earlier, "It's hard to disagree with [Singer]" (min 3:25). And remember, Singer's idea of "everyone" did not include German Jews in the 1940's. This is in sharp contrast to Garrett Hardin's point of view, which Hank claims is

arbitrary (min 7:18). Yet, as harsh as Hardin's views are, as presented they actually incorporate the virtues of justice, prudence and temperance. All that is missing is the fortitude on our part to accept with humility that we cannot fix all the world's problems. As Saint Teresa of Calcutta said, "If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one."

I would also caution one to pay close attention to what is being said in this video. With a small exception made at min 2:43, every argument talks as if we either had to go all in or not at all. Even this exception was so heavily weighted that no rational person could debate it. We do hear phrases like "little cost to ourselves," which I would agree to, but before the video is over we are led to believe that we need to help even if our boat sinks in doing so. This is not what I call "little cost to ourselves." Although the idea is presented as being reasonable, without realizing it we are no longer dealing with modest goals, but firm absolutes. Hank rightly calls this out as an "either/or" fallacy (min 7:11), but he only calls it out on Hardin. We see Singer committing this at least twice himself (calling out those who fail to help as "you failed spectacularly as a moral agent," at min 4:27 and then suggesting that it doesn't matter if we ruin ourselves helping those in need at min 7:46) yet he is not called out on this fallacy.

i) Christian Perspective: To provide some sanity to this discussion, let us go back to the Christian way of thinking. Because our morality is grounded in faith and hope, we are called to embrace the other five virtues. A good Christian will, of course, sacrifice the \$200 sneakers to save the little girl because prudence says that the charity given is temperate to the justice of saving her life, and fortitude is what makes him willing to act on this prudence. It is true that not all Christians give to charity as much as they should, but no other group promotes charitable activities as much as Christians do. Christian organizations are by far the most efficient. They routinely have 95% of donated funds actually getting to those intended to be helped (Catholic charities in third world countries even reach 98-99%). Non-Christian private organizations typically range between 80 and 90%. Government charities rarely exceed 50%, and may be as low as 30%. Like it or not, faith in Jehovah and hope of Heaven makes a difference when it comes to charity.

ii) Perspective: I do not want to suggest that world hunger is not real, or that we can freely ignore it, but again, let's put things in perspective. According to Hank, there are 12 deaths due to poverty worldwide each minute. In the United States, there were (before the Dobb's Decision) two abortions every minute. The world has a population of just less than eight billion people, the United States has a population of about 330 million. This means that, *per capita*, a child is four times as likely to be aborted in the United States than to die due to poverty worldwide. These lives being lost to abortion are truly 100% preventable, and to save these lives literally costs nothing. If we can be expected to give up our resources to save children from poverty worldwide, then we can most certainly save children in our own country at no cost.

iii) Connections: We also need to talk about some real world issues. Any action we take to help someone ultimately comes back to love, and love requires a connection. To save the life of a drowning stranger is an act of charity (agape). To send aid to people in need anywhere in the world is also charity. But the connection one has to a drowning child in front of one's eyes has a much stronger connection than does a person one has never laid eyes on.

iv) Prudence: Hardin presents a much more prudent argument than the video gives him credit for. This video really doesn't address all the difficulties associated with charitable activities. To try to discredit him on grounds that there are enough resources and we just need to distribute them better (min 7:04) is extremely naive. Let me discuss just two of the problems here.

Most importantly is the infrastructure needed to support such an effort. Airports and sea ports currently capable of handling existing levels of outside aid may fail catastrophically if this effort suddenly increased by even 10%. The necessary fixes will not be cheap by any stretch of the imagination. Will this money come out of the donated funds (which will reduce what is given to the poor and invariably help the rich), or should the already impoverish local government foot the bill, reducing its ability to take care of its people even more so?

Next, let's not forget political realities. The purpose of a government is to take care of the needs of its people. Governments that can't or don't do so are bad governments, yet they are governments nonetheless. For the U.S. (or any other organization) to assume full responsibility for the population of another country would, therefore, effectively remove the existing government. This is the very essence of total war. Can we justify all the atrocities and the collateral damage associated with war with the good that comes from feeding the survivors? As can be seen, the argument that Hardin was engaged in as an "either/or" fallacy is gravely misplaced. Hardin may have over-simplified his theory, but he was much closer to reality than any other idea presented here.

v) The Real Problem: I also want to point out that poverty itself is not the problem. Aborigines that are fortunate enough to be far away from advanced civilizations arguably have a much better quality of life than middle class Americans. They generally have sufficient resources to meet their needs, the whole village will assist someone who runs into misfortune outside their control, and they have much more free time to spend on their humble pastimes. We cannot fix the problems *associated* with poverty by simply handing out money. To throw money at poverty creates what I call the "build and forget" mentality, and is a fundamental reason why socialist programs fail. Consider the scandal the United States went through in Afghanistan when schools were built with no thought as to hiring teachers or for buying books. There is also the humiliation Oprah Winfrey suffered when the teachers at the all-girl school she built in Africa molested its students. So when Hank suggests that if all Americans gave but 1% of their income that world poverty would end (min 4:35), he is sadly delusional and teaching a very toxic lesson.

vi) Fairness: We see the idea of "fairness" coming up again. I find it strange that, in the previous three videos concerning "fairness," the only time *you* deserved to be treated fairly was at the expense of family obligations (last video). Every other example had the so-called "privilege" make sacrifices to the "underprivileged." We will see in the next video how "fairness" can be applied to one at the expense of the life of an unborn baby, or the elderly, or the infirm. It bothers me that this series can only offer suggestions in making things fair by taking away things from those who have more. Christianity seeks fairness by building the weak up; socialism seeks fairness by tearing the strong down.

vii) Parting Shots: I find it ironic that, after 44 of the 46 videos in the series, Hank finally brings up the "either/or" fallacy. An important goal for me in undertaking this work is to show how Jehovah has a "both/and" relationship with philosophy, and just how critical it is to philosophy for such a relationship to exist.

In the end, temperance with an eye to charity and justice should dictate how much support we give or don't give. Despite Singer's flippant idea that we should not be arbitrary in our morality, the comment of "there's really only one boat" (min 7:45) is the most arbitrary statement one can make about humanity. There are almost eight billion people in the world today, and to suggest that not one exception is possible is perhaps the most absurd statement that has been said in the entire series. To add insult to injury, unborn children, without explanation, *are* excluded from this boat.

The idea that "giving to charity is like getting moral extra-credit" (min 1:41) is basically eudaimonia as discussed in Virtue Theory (**video 38**). I find it ironic that Hank, who was so proud of Virtue Theory as it was taught ("no God required."), must now face the reality that people will often choose *not* to be awesome when not grounded in Jehovah.

6) Video 45 (Assisted Death & the Value of Life): I personally find this video to be a horrid hodge podge of half thought out ideas that would be comical if the stakes involved were not so serious. Contrary to his opening remarks ("You have many philosophical concepts under your belt now, and you are fully equipped to step into the wilderness we call everyday life and analyze what you find." (min 1:16)), the extreme rationalism presented has created a socialist dream world with no idea what reality is about. And this video provides a wonderful opportunity to expose why and how it is wrong. The problem is, with the extreme rationalism, the rarest of cases are brought up in argument for killing people (see my discussion in **Topic C.6.iii**). And when I get to **Topic C.6.iv**, I will talk about how open to abuse euthanasia really is.

i) Personhood: Let me start with Hank saying, "For now, let's assume, for the sake of argument, that fetuses are persons." (min 2:36). Nothing presented in the series beforehand suggests this assumption is rational. The idea of personhood based on biological makeup was rejected several times (the Ship of Theseus being the most memorable (**video 18**)). It was suggested that personhood and humanity do not by necessity equate (**videos 19 - 21**), and that personhood need not involve being organic (AI robots in **video 23** comes to mind). While not specifically mentioned, the Age of Reason played into several moral theories (especially Kantianism in **video 35**) when considering what a moral agent was, meaning one is a moral agent no sooner than 4 years of age. He talked about using memories (**video 20**), but this means personhood won't start until about age 6. And if we look at legal terminology (such as for Hate Speech (**video 28**) and for Utilitarianism as it applies to any debt we owe our parents (**videos 36 and 43**)), we now suggest humans are not persons until somewhere in their mid to late teens. Using the tools Hank gave us, we could make an argument that it is acceptable to abort a child 16 years or more postnatal. So Hank is right in a perverted way. Based on the tools we were given, we must, by necessity, make a very strong assumption that fetuses are persons in order to discuss half the material in this video in a meaningful manner.

ii) Gretchen Voss: In what I find to be an inexcusable case of professional deceit, Hank's case study of Gretchen Voss and her choice to abort the child based on medical problems is not based on fact, but on speculation (min 6:00-6:19). He spends this entire segment guessing Gretchen's frame of mind. This is a contemporary case study, not ancient history. Furthermore, she is a famous blogger. There is no reason why Hank has to *guess* as to what she was thinking when she decided to abort the baby. This should have been researched.

iii) Reasons for Abortion: To claim that those who support abortion have a respect of life needs serious justification. "Contemporary American philosopher Margaret Olivia Little argues that the decision to abort is *often about a deep respect for creation*, rather than a disregard for it." (min 3:14, italics mine) That is an awfully strong assumption on her part, especially considering the stakes. Are there any facts to support this? According to an article by the Guttmacher Institute (the most powerful and influential pro-abortion organization in the world) published 1 September 2005, they claimed the following results after interviewing over 1,900 women in 38 clinics as they had abortions:

The reasons most frequently cited were that having a child would interfere with a woman's education, work or ability to care for dependents (74%);

that she could not afford a baby now (73%); and that she did not want to be a single mother or was having relationship problems (48%). Nearly four in 10 women said they had completed their childbearing, and almost one-third were not ready to have a child. Fewer than 1% said their parents' or partners' desire for them to have an abortion was the most important reason. Younger women often reported that they were unprepared for the transition to motherhood, while older women regularly cited their responsibility to dependents.

The report concluded with: "The decision to have an abortion is typically motivated by multiple, diverse and interrelated reasons. The themes of responsibility to others and resource limitations, such as financial constraints and lack of partner support, recurred throughout the study."

Based on the world's most respected pro-abortion agency, Quality of Life does indeed play a major role in having an abortion. But it is the Quality of Life for the would-be mother, not the would-be child. Considering that Guttmacher identified parental influence as being "fewer than 1%," I feel reasonably comfortable inferring that "medical reasons" must have been either below half a percent or not mentioned at all among the nearly 2000 cases interviewed. I also want to point out that Guttmacher also proudly announces that there are over 1 million abortions in the U.S. every year (prior to the Dobbs Decision) that they help make possible. If I may quote Hank again from **video 42** when he was defending animal rights, "So, if you are saying that reasons don't matter - *that you can do just what you want even if your actions are internally inconsistent*, then not only are you not doing philosophy, well, you're sort of opting out of rational discourse altogether." (min 8:22, italic mine) Little's argument failed to show up even as an anomaly in a massive study. How can her argument possibly be considered "internally consistent?"

We must also note that "medical reasons" can be deceiving in and of itself. The same test that checks for genetic abnormalities also checks for gender, eye color, etc. Even when we do discuss cases based on legitimate medical concerns (however small it might actually be), we still have the thorny reality that, while abortion may save the child some pain from being born, it also denies the child the pleasures it would have experienced if allowed to live. A child need not be raised in a wealthy home to have a good life, especially in the U.S..

When dealing with abortion, we can no longer stay in the dream world of extreme rationalism; we need to address reality as it is. We cannot let Mary, no matter how learned she may be of the color red, tell us what red is like while she remains in her colorless world (a reference to **video 22**). A life is at stake. If it is wrong for a company to deny employment based on a person's skin color, sexual preference, race or gender (**video 41**), then how can we say it's okay to terminate a life based on these same criteria (as allowed in at least some states and many countries)? Don't forget the pain the aborted child goes through (talked about in **Topic C.3.v**). Is justice being done when someone who chose to have sexual intercourse for pleasure feels terminating a life is an acceptable alternative to the predictable consequences of said intercourse? How can we practice fortitude if we always take the easy way out? I realize that this argument does not apply to pregnancies caused by rape, but the rarity of it (like the medical reasons) does not justify abortion as a whole, and there are still other options available to the victim.

iv) Euthanasia: To start off with, euthanasia is a very shady business. Despite politicians promising "strict supervision" over such matters, neither Belgium (the world leader in progressive euthanasia matters) nor Washington state (leader in the U.S.) so much as even require those

filling out assisted suicide reports to claim that death was voluntary. In Belgium, a "patient" as young as 12 can make this decision without parental consent, and efforts are being made to reduce this age even lower. Similar laws are being proposed and even passed in the United States. Once the drugs are applied for and in the house, there only needs to be one person in the house to administer the drugs to the "patient." The only witness necessary is the killer. And this killer can even be a beneficiary of the "patient's" will and life insurance. If the would-be suicide wants to postpone the death for any reason, or begins to have second thoughts once the reality of its finality sets in, they are at the mercy of whoever is in the house. I recommend going to margaretdore.org for more information on how "choice" is an illusion when it comes to euthanasia.

Both abortion and euthanasia (which will include assisted suicide here for simplicity) must come back to human dignity, and need to be looked at from the perspective of the seven virtues. Human dignity demands every unborn child a chance to live the best life he can (faith, hope and justice being the virtues of *why* and the others being the virtues of *how*). It does, however, get a little more complicated with euthanasia.

Christianity respects *both* the Sanctity of Life *and* the Sanctity of Quality of Life. This is not a contradiction, but rather a check and balance just like the seven virtues check and balance each other. Until about 30 years ago, the two were almost inseparable. But we are in a time when most Christian churches (including the Catholic Church) recognize that medical science has gotten to the point where biological functions can be maintained simply for the purpose of keeping them going. There comes a time when this is not life as Christians understand it, but rather a mockery of it. At this point, medical science is no longer protecting life, but challenging Jehovah's claim on death.

This is very much a case by case matter, so I will not pretend to give advice here. It is my goal to explain what makes the difference. If a life is being lived for no purpose other than to exist (such as those in comas with no chance of recovering), or lived for the sole purpose of prolonging suffering (such as terminal case of painful cancer that leaves the victim bedridden), then there opens the possibility of ending the life virtuously. And the technology needed to keep such people alive is expensive, so temperance and fortitude are perhaps the most difficult virtues to come to terms with when dealing with euthanasia. How much should a family give up to keep the beloved of agape alive? It is tough. But I can't emphasize this enough: it must be a case by case situation, never a medical policy and much less a law.

7) Video 46 (What is a Good Life?): Being the last video in the series, it is both expected and appropriate to bring together previous discussions. I agree that good philosophy will make for good parents, teachers, bosses, etc. I also agree that good philosophers always question things and that one should examine oneself. I find this video does a very good job comparing the classic philosophers (with a mini-case study on Aristotle) with contemporary atheists (with a mini-case study on Albert Camus). We also see some long overdue emphasis placed on "value," something I've been calling for since the beginning. The problem is, value is still placed here on man's ideas, not Jehovah's. But first, a few words on Camus.

i) Albert Camus: If one remembers, I placed Camus as a Father of Atheism, not as a contemporary atheist (**Topic I.B.3**). But he, along with Jean-Paul Sartre and Ayn Rand, represented the *end* of that era. Of these three, it is Camus that best links the two eras together. Rand's views were closer to the early Fathers of Atheism. Sartre, like Camus, was an existentialist, and both believed in the absurd. But while Sartre essentially admitted that atheism as a philosophy was a failure even if it was in "reality" true (**Topic III.B.1.iv**), Camus decided to continue to distract himself from the

meaninglessness of it. It appears to me that he would have appreciated the song lyric, "I may be going to hell in a bucket/but at least I'm enjoying the ride" (*Hell in a Bucket* by Grateful Dead, writers John Barlow, Robert Weir and Brent Mydland).

We begin serious discussion with Camus's perverted idea of Sisyphus. In another example of how ingrained the Christian worldview is in our culture, to the point we don't notice it, Camus believes he can find morality in pagan mythology. Well, perhaps we can, but it is the same moral time and time again. All pagan morality, including this myth, ultimately comes down to "Don't make the gods mad at you." And Camus's "interpretation" is nothing short of a special form of madness. According to Camus, the fact that Sisyphus is capable of carrying out his punishment is reason enough for Sisyphus to be happy, because being punished can only happen when one exists. As long as one has existence, then one has the choice to be happy. Existentialists don't look at emotion as a response to reality, they look at it as a way to create reality. Just to be clear, I accept that one can transcend one's surroundings and control one's emotions, but I do reject that our emotions define the reality we experience.

ii) Death: The real problem with existentialism is death. Whatever value we assign to our lives ends at our death. If we are selfish, then this is quite obvious as we left nothing behind to be remembered by. But even if we were altruistic in our lives, we cannot guarantee what we did will last either. Even if we personally funded, delivered and provided food and medical supplies to an impoverished village in a third world country for years, all it would take is a few hours for slavers to come by and kill or enthrall them all. This may even happen while the benefactor is present to see it (Jim of the Jungle from **video 36** comes to mind). This is what Nozick (who continues to be a welcome breath of sanity as we end the series) warned us about in the Thought Bubble.

iii) Thought Bubble: This is basically the Brain in a Jar idea I talked about in **video 5**, but with a twist. In this experiment, we take the place of Jehovah by deciding our story instead of someone else. And I agree with Nozick that to participate in such an experiment would be awful, as our disordered appetites (**Topic III.B.1.vi**) will be able to run completely unhindered. Whatever protection against our addictions that time, space, and personal resources impose upon us will be gone. To experience disagreeable situations is part of the human condition and is necessary. We cannot avoid it; at best we can delay it. The longer we delay it, however, the harder it will be to deal with when it finally comes around. In *Atlas Shrugged*, Ryan suggests that in such a time, our minds will snap, putting us in a mental hell worthy of the most vicious "fire and brimstone" sermon any preacher came up with.

And the reason should be obvious: it is a lie. We can't enjoy skydiving in virtual reality as much as the real thing because the threat of death, no matter how small, is real when we really sky dive. Indeed, much of the thrill and emotional benefits of such a sport is in facing, in a controlled way, one's own mortality. We can't enjoy a relationship with an A.I. in virtual reality because they are only doing it because they are programmed to, not because they find us worth being around (in other words, we will never experience knowing we have something lovable in us). No doubt there are those who, if they had the resources, would spend as much time as they could in such a false world. But they are not "creating meaning" to their lives; they are running away from it.

iv) Parting Shot: I find it quite interesting that Aristotle (or any other classical philosopher who is still remembered), who did not close his mind to Jehovah, came up with a philosophy encouraging us to seek what may never be achieved: eudiamonia. Camus, who did close his mind to Jehovah, can only tell us to try to be happy in the twilight zone reality of our existence. The classical philosophers called us to rise above our wretched state; contemporary atheists tell us to

accept our wretched state. The classical philosophers hoped against hope for the reality of Jehovah and told their followers to do the same; contemporary atheists would have us lie to ourselves in order to spite Jehovah. These views cannot be reconciled; one must ultimately accept one or the other.

Conclusions: I hope that the gentle reader can understand the dangerous ideas that are being taught to our youth today. The socialist movement in the United States today is not by accident, but a deliberate effort to confuse the young as to what reality is. In this series, I have examined what is being taught in our schools and demonstrated why it is wrong. Note how the destruction of the Christian faith is so key to all these efforts. The best way we can ensure the liberties we take for granted in the United States is to learn what Christianity is really about, and then teach it to our young.

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video 40 link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0CTHVCkm90>
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