

Historical Ethics: Fact-Based Challenges

Ethics · Answer Key · 15 Questions

1. The Nuremberg Trials, following World War II, established crucial legal principles concerning crimes against humanity. Which foundational document, adopted by the United Nations in 1948, reflects these ethical principles?

- A) The Geneva Conventions of 1949
- B) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights**
- C) The Hague Conventions of 1907
- D) The Treaty of Versailles

2. The Tuskegee Syphilis Study, a notorious public health experiment conducted from 1932 to 1972, violated fundamental ethical principles. What was the primary ethical transgression committed against the African American men who participated?

- A) Lack of informed consent and withholding of treatment**
- B) Forced participation without any disclosure
- C) Experimental drug administration without medical supervision
- D) Dissemination of private health information to third parties

3. In the context of ethical utilitarianism, Jeremy Bentham's 'felicific calculus' was an attempt to quantify pleasure and pain. Which factor was NOT a component of his hedonic calculus?

- A) Intensity
- B) Duration
- C) Propinquity (nearness)
- D) Social desirability**

4. The development of the Hippocratic Oath, attributed to ancient Greek physicians, established early ethical guidelines for medical practice. What key principle is central to its original ethical framework?

- A) Patient autonomy
- B) Confidentiality and doing no harm**
- C) Euthanasia for terminal patients
- D) Financial compensation for services

5. The Milgram experiment on obedience to authority, conducted in the 1960s, raised significant ethical concerns regarding psychological harm to participants. What was the primary ethical issue highlighted by the experiment's findings?

- A) Deception about the true nature of the experiment
- B) Physical coercion of participants
- C) Inadequate debriefing and psychological distress**
- D) Violation of privacy and anonymity

6. The ethical framework of Immanuel Kant, known as deontology, emphasizes duty and universal moral laws. What concept did Kant propose as the supreme principle of morality?

- A) The greatest happiness principle
- B) The categorical imperative**
- C) The veil of ignorance
- D) The golden rule

7. The establishment of the Belmont Report in 1979 was a direct response to unethical research practices, particularly the Tuskegee Syphilis Study. What are the three core ethical principles it outlines for human subjects research?

- A) Justice, Beneficence, and Non-maleficence
- B) Autonomy, Beneficence, and Justice
- C) Respect for Persons, Beneficence, and Justice**
- D) Confidentiality, Fidelity, and Veracity

8. John Rawls' theory of justice, outlined in 'A Theory of Justice' (1971), proposes a thought experiment to determine fair principles of social cooperation. What is this thought experiment called?

- A) The original position**
- B) The ethical egoism dilemma
- C) The consequentialist challenge
- D) The duty-based framework

9. The ethical debates surrounding nuclear weapons development and use have been prominent since the mid-20th century. Which ethical justification is most commonly associated with the doctrine of 'just war' theory as applied to nuclear deterrence?

- A) Maximizing utility through preemptive strike
- B) Maintaining peace through mutually assured destruction (MAD)**
- C) Achieving unconditional surrender of adversaries
- D) Promoting global disarmament at any cost

10. The practice of eugenics, popular in the early 20th century, was based on flawed scientific premises and had devastating ethical consequences. What was the purported ethical goal of eugenics movements?

- A) To improve the genetic quality of the human population**
- B) To provide equal opportunities for all individuals
- C) To foster cultural diversity and understanding
- D) To eradicate inherited diseases through medical intervention

11. The development of early AI ethics frameworks was influenced by science fiction and early computational theories. Isaac Asimov's 'Three Laws of Robotics' are a well-known example. Which of these laws was intended to prevent robots from harming humans?

- A) A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.**
- B) A robot must obey the orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.
- C) A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law.
- D) A robot must not engage in any action that is not directly ordered by a human.

12. The principle of 'informed consent' in medical and research ethics has evolved significantly. A landmark legal case in the United States that significantly influenced the development of informed consent standards was:

- A) Roe v. Wade
- B) Miranda v. Arizona
- C) Canterbury v. Spence**
- D) Griswold v. Connecticut

13. The ethical implications of early industrialization led to significant social reforms. The widespread use of child labor in factories during the 19th century was eventually addressed through legislation. Which of these was a key ethical concern associated with child labor?

- A) Exploitation of vulnerable populations and deprivation of education**
- B) Increased economic productivity for families
- C) Development of early job skills
- D) Contribution to national industrial growth

14. The philosophical concept of 'virtue ethics,' championed by Aristotle, focuses on character development. What is the central aim of virtue ethics?

- A) Adhering to strict moral rules
- B) Maximizing overall happiness
- C) Cultivating good character traits (virtues)**
- D) Fulfilling one's duties and obligations

15. The doctrine of 'double effect,' a principle in some ethical traditions, is used to evaluate actions that have both a good and a bad outcome. Which of the following is a necessary condition for an action to be permissible under the doctrine of double effect?

- A) The bad effect must be intended as the primary outcome.
- B) The good effect must be a direct consequence of the bad effect.
- C) The good effect must outweigh the bad effect, and the bad effect must not be a means to the good effect.**
- D) The bad effect must be unavoidable, even if the good effect is not achieved.