

Contemporary Moral Problems

Chapter: The Categorical Imperative

Amazonlink:

<http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0534517242>

What I expect to learn:

- To learn the meaning of categorical imperative according to Kant

Quote:

“Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the time as an end...”

Book Review:

According to wikipedia, categorical imperative is the central philosophical concept in the moral philosophy of Immanuel Kant, as well as the modern deontological ethics. The concept of the categorical imperative is a syllogism. The first premise is that a person acts morally if his or her conduct would, without condition, be the “right” conduct for any person in similar circumstances. The second premise is that conduct is “right” if it treats others as ends in themselves and not as means to an end. The conclusion is that a person acts morally when he or she acts as if his or her conduct was establishing a universal law governing others in similar circumstances.

On this chapter Kant also mentioned two versions of categorical imperative, first is hypothetical imperative which is about telling us what to do in order to achieve a particular goal, then the second version is about imperfect duty. The first imperative is about the standards dictated by the society while the second acknowledges the uniqueness of every individual.

What I have learned:

- I learned that there are two types of categorical imperative

Integrative Question:

1. What is good will?
2. What is categorical imperative?
3. What is the importance of knowing the first and second versions of categorical imperative?
4. Do you agree with Kant's ideals? Why or why not?
5. What are the morals worth of an action?

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Categorical_imperative