

# Contemporary Moral Problems

## Chapter: Taking Rights Seriously

### Amazon link:

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

### What I expect to learn:

- To learn more about my rights
- To learn why should I take my rights seriously

### Quote:

“The institution of rights against the Government is not a gift of God, or an ancient ritual, or a national sport. It is a complex and troublesome practice that makes the Government’s job of securing the general benefit more difficult and more expensive, and it would be frivolous and wrongful practice unless served some point.”

### Book Review:

It has been argued that Dworkin’s theory of social equality lacks tangible “bite” in that it does not adequately address obvious examples of governments that have failed to implement political systems that entitle every citizen to be respected. Many tangible, controversial and everyday wrongs have to be more visible to and subject to critique by someone like Dworkin who calls for “taking rights seriously”.

Ronald Dworkin is an American philosopher of law and scholar of constitutional law. He is Jeremy Bentham Professor of Law and Philosophy at University College London, Frank Henry Sommer Professor of Law at New York University, and has taught previously at Yale Law School and the University of Oxford. An influential contributor to both philosophy of law and political philosophy, Dworkin received the 2007 Holberg International Memorial Prize in the Humanities for “his pioneering scholarly work” of “worldwide impact.” His theory of law as integrity is amongst the most influential contemporary theories about the nature of law. He advocates a “moral reading” of the United States Constitution.

The author stresses that we should see moral rights in a strong sense. The logic is protected by the U.S. constitution or the law which will protect us from immoral things that other people might do to us. The first model is about balance between the rights of the

individual and the demands of the society. The second is to condense a right as much more serious as increasing one.

**What I have learned:**

- I learned that we SHOULD take rights SERIOUSLY

**Integrative Question:**

1. What is the law?
2. When will we know that we disobeyed the law?
3. Why should we take rights seriously?
4. How are things considered right?
5. Is knowing your rights really important?

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald\\_Dworkin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Dworkin)