

# Lecture 6, Sep 23, 2022

## Rawls' Veil of Ignorance

- What do you want in a society if you don't get to choose your role in it?
- A sense of principled "duty" – doing what is necessary

## Reflexive Principlism

- Objective: Determine a pragmatic ethical approach for engineers
- Assumptions:
  1. Theoretical approaches do not sufficiently empower action
    - We make our ethical decisions before we apply ethical reasoning
  2. Case-based approaches do not enable flexibility in new situations

## Principlism

- Originating from biomedical ethics
- Consider 4 principles:
  1. Autonomy
    - Supporting and respecting people making their own decisions
  2. Beneficence
    - How much good is the decision going to yield?
  3. Justice
    - Who takes the risks and who gets the benefits?
    - Those who benefit from something should also pay the costs
  4. Nonmaleficence
    - Avoiding the causation of harm

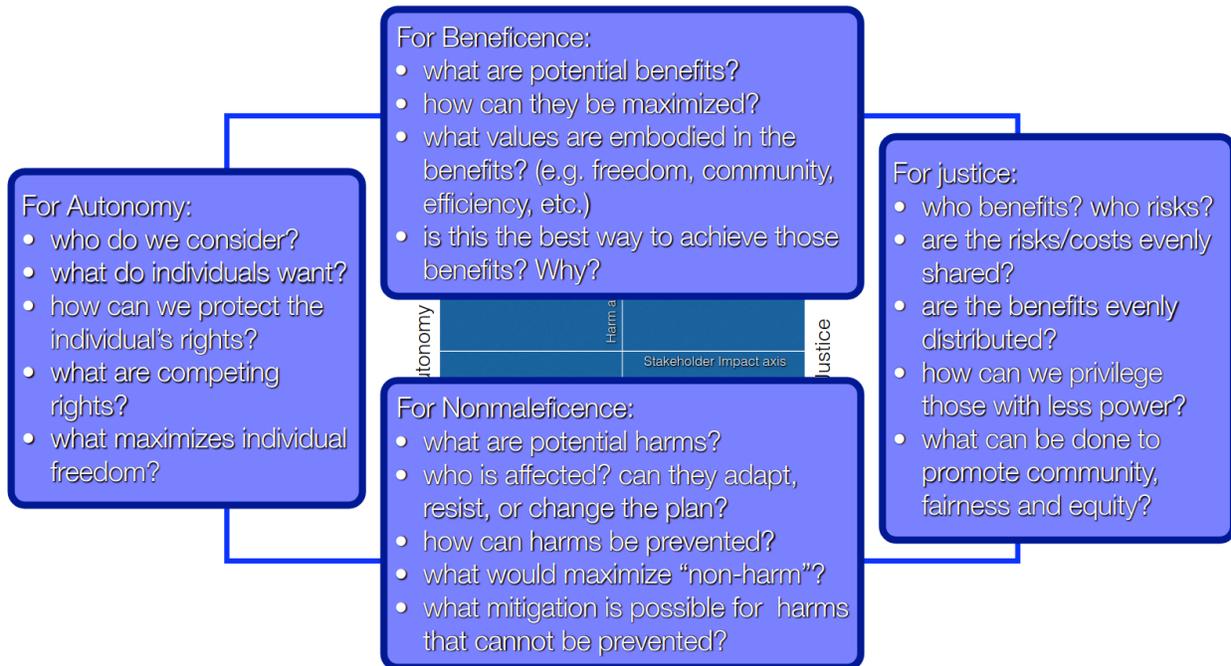


Figure 1: Questions to ask for each principle

- Principles guide ethical reasoning, allow for flexibility in ethical reasoning, and also provide a backdrop against which to evaluate codes and guidelines

- Can be used in conjunction with codes
- Tries to satisfy the universal ethics, but also uses principles to negotiate an agreed course of action
  - Tries to reconcile relative and absolute ethics
- Autonomy and justice, and nonmaleficence and beneficence make up 2 axes

### Reflectivity and Reflexivity

- Reflective is consciously reflecting between normative judgements and ethical principles
- Reflexive is unconsciously relying on ethical reasoning skills and intuition developed over time to reach ethical conclusions
- Reflexivity is needed because reflectivity is done after the fact as a process of justification

### The Ethical Reasoning Process

1. Specification: narrowing the scope of principles and figuring out how they apply to a situation
2. Balancing: adjudicating conflicts between the principles (figure out which one to emphasize)
3. Justification: evaluating the coherence and completeness of an ethical reasoning decision

### Core Premises of the Ethics of Care

1. Interconnectedness: awareness of one's place in a web of actors
2. Interdependence: relationships that motivate reciprocal responsibilities and beneficial care
3. Competence for care: virtues, skills and knowledge required for beneficial caring relationships to flourish
4. Attentiveness: to the context of moral questions and problems

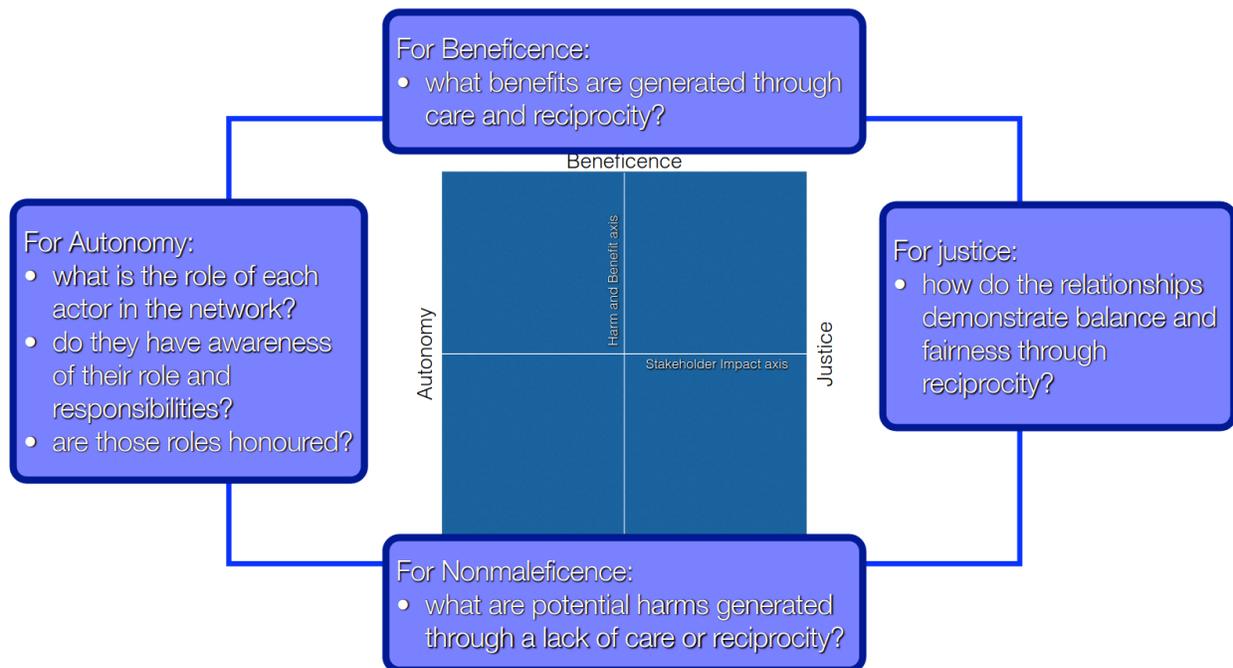


Figure 2: Additional questions to ask based on the Ethics of Care

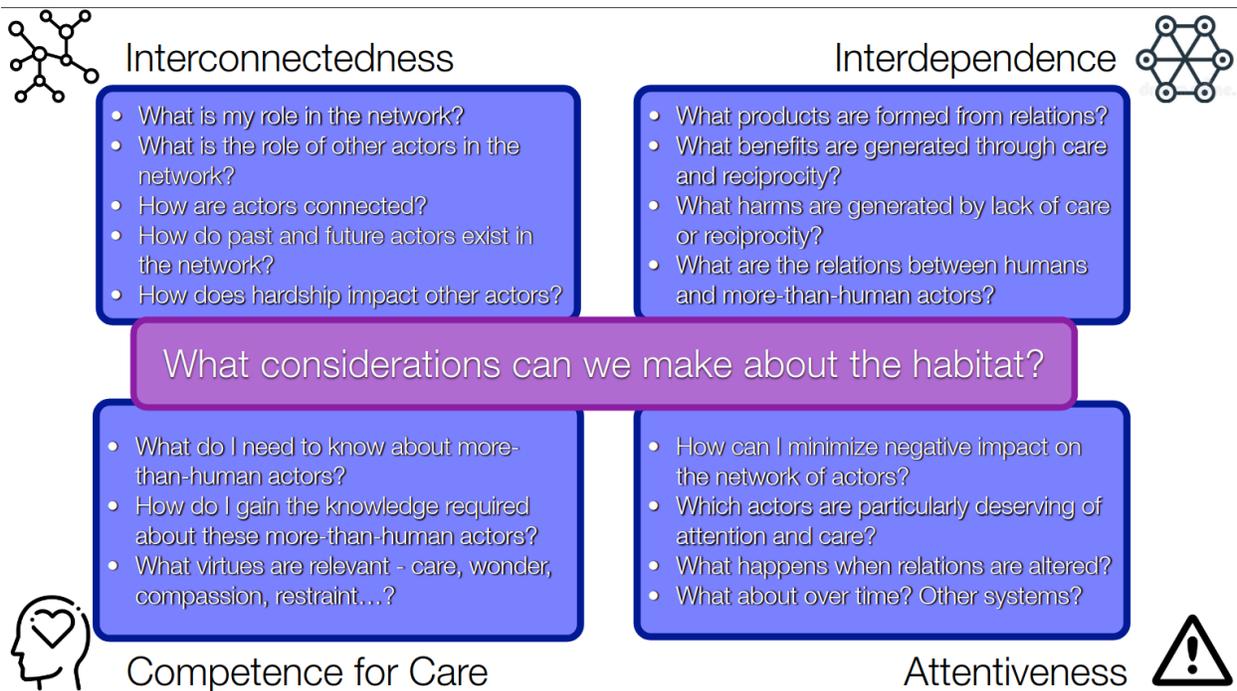


Figure 3: Ethics of Care questions