Climate change and hybrid ethics: a review of four ethical theories

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October 26, 2011
Global Climate Change highlights a basic issue of Human Rights.
Influential Moral Theories and Climate Change
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Utilitarianism
Kantianism
Confucianism
Taoism
Why is climate change a matter of ethics and justice?
Why is climate change a matter of ethics, a matter of justice?

- *Disproportionate Contribution*

  the scarce resource

  : the atmospheric capacity to absorb greenhouse gases without altering climatic system
Why is climate change a matter of ethics, a matter of justice?

- Disproportionate Contribution

- *Disproportionate Burdens*

vulnerable populations in developing countries
Why is climate change a matter of ethics, a matter of justice?

- Disproportionate Responsibilities
- Disproportionate Burdens

- *Intergenerational Issue*

  future generations and climate change impacts
Why is climate change a matter of ethics, a matter of justice?

- *Disproportionate Responsibilities*
- *Disproportionate Burdens*
- *Intergenerational Issues*
Climate Change is mostly viewed as:

- a danger to the natural environment in the North (developed countries)
- a threat to human well-being in the South (developing countries)
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Utilitarianism
Kantianism
Confucianism
Taoism
Utilitarianism
Kantianism
Confucianism
Taoism

Commonality $\rightarrow$ Universality
Utilitarianism

• utility - crosses time and borders
• well-being of all human beings
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Utilitarianism</strong></th>
<th><strong>Kantianism</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Difference</strong></td>
<td>consequences of actions</td>
<td>motivation for actions duty to act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Similarity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>universality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taoism

• ecological world view
• the principle of coexistence
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Taoism</th>
<th>Utilitarianism Kantianism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>relationship between humans and nature</td>
<td>human relationship with each other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similarity</td>
<td>global conception of ethics</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Confucianism

• self-cultivation
• cosmopolitan and ecological perspective
• mutuality, responsibility, obligation
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Taoism and Confucianism

- legal instruments and enforcement mechanisms
- Confucianism’s self-cultivation
- Taoism’s ecological worldview
The Theories and Climate Change

Utilitarianism

• the best consequences at the least cost

Kantianism

• the formula of universal law
• the formula of the end itself
Commonality

- *universality*
- caring for all other human beings
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References


