

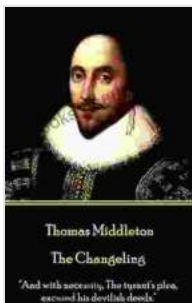
# And With Necessity The Tyrant Plea Excused His Devilish Deeds: A Comprehensive Exploration of the Utilitarian Defense in Ethics

Utilitarianism, a consequentialist ethical theory, posits that the rightness or wrongness of an action is determined solely by its consequences.

According to this theory, the best action to take in any given situation is the one that maximizes overall happiness or well-being. This principle has been employed to defend actions that would otherwise be considered morally reprehensible, arguing that the positive outcomes outweigh the negative ones.

## The Utilitarian Defense

The utilitarian defense, also known as the "greatest happiness" principle, was first formulated by Jeremy Bentham in the 18th century. Bentham argued that the only thing that truly matters in ethics is the amount of happiness or pleasure experienced by those affected by our actions. He believed that we should always act in ways that maximize the net amount of happiness, even if this requires us to do things that would otherwise be considered wrong.



## The Changeling: "And with necessity, The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds." by Thomas Middleton

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

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John Stuart Mill, another influential utilitarian, argued that not all happiness is equal. He believed that some forms of happiness are more valuable than others, such as intellectual pursuits over sensual pleasures. Mill also recognized that the pursuit of happiness can sometimes conflict with other important values, such as justice or equality. He argued that we should weigh these competing values carefully and choose the course of action that produces the best overall outcome.

## **Arguments for the Utilitarian Defense**

There are several arguments that can be made in favor of the utilitarian defense. First, utilitarianism is a very flexible and adaptable ethical theory. It can be used to justify a wide range of actions, from the most altruistic to the most self-interested. This flexibility makes it a very practical theory to use in real-world situations.

Second, utilitarianism is based on the idea of maximizing happiness for the greatest number of people. This makes it a very egalitarian theory, as it gives equal weight to the happiness of all individuals. This egalitarianism is one of the things that makes utilitarianism so appealing to many people.

Finally, utilitarianism is a very consequentialist theory. It focuses solely on the consequences of our actions and does not take into account our

intentions or motives. This makes it a very objective theory to use, as it does not rely on subjective factors such as our feelings or beliefs.

## **Arguments against the Utilitarian Defense**

There are also several arguments that can be made against the utilitarian defense. First, some critics argue that utilitarianism is too simplistic. It does not take into account the complexity of human behavior or the different ways that people can experience happiness. This simplicity can lead to utilitarianism being used to justify actions that are clearly wrong.

Second, some critics argue that utilitarianism is too demanding. It requires us to always act in ways that maximize overall happiness, which can be very difficult to do in practice. This demand can lead to us feeling overwhelmed or guilty when we fail to live up to our ethical ideals.

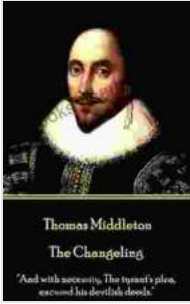
Finally, some critics argue that utilitarianism is incompatible with other important values, such as justice or equality. They argue that utilitarianism can be used to justify actions that violate these other values, such as punishing innocent people in order to deter crime.

The utilitarian defense is a complex and controversial ethical theory. There are both strong arguments for and against its use in justifying actions that would otherwise be considered immoral. Ultimately, whether or not to use the utilitarian defense is a decision that each individual must make for themselves.

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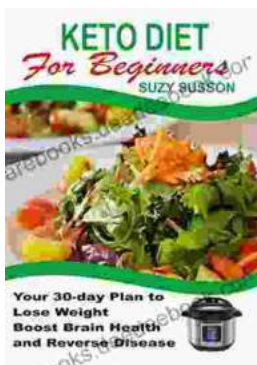


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