

Paper #4: Applied Ethics Case Study

Instructions: Paper #4 is due no later than midnight on **Saturday, April 26**. Late papers will be penalized at minus 5 points for the first day late and minus one point for each additional day. The paper is worth 50 points. Papers should be no less than **1,000 words**. Papers should demonstrate a thorough awareness of the topic as well as the ability to engage in philosophical reasoning.

Outside research is not necessary, and in fact you are strongly encouraged to write this paper with nothing but the course materials and your brain in hand, but if you do use external sources you must provide **complete citations**. Failure to cite your sources is academic misconduct and will result in a failure of the assignment (for more information, see the academic honesty section of the syllabus and the handouts on academic misconduct and proper citations). If you have any doubts about whether your paper is properly cited, I am happy to look at it for you in advance of the due date.

You will submit your paper via **SafeAssign** by following these steps:

Log on to the Blackboard website for the class.

Click on "Submit to SafeAssign."

Click on "Paper 4 View/Complete."

Attach your paper.

Check "I agree to submit my paper to the Global Reference Database."

Click "Submit."

Make sure you receive a green message validating that your paper has been accepted into the system. If you don't receive that message, try again. If you have problems, call me and I will walk you through it (305-904-8626).

The Assignment

Select one of the case studies provided below. Do not re-explain the case; you should assume your reader already knows the relevant information.

- 1) Give a clear explanation of what *at least one of the authors* we have read in this section would say about the morality of the case.
- 2) Offer *your own argument* regarding the morality of the case.
- 3) Show that you understand *at least one counterargument against* the view that you hold.

Tip: Good papers will demonstrate awareness of the moral nuances of the case through the use of *philosophical vocabulary* and the application of *principles* that you have learned in this unit and in the class as a whole.

Case #1: Right to Parenthood?

While consulting with a fertility specialist, Leonard and Rachel discover that they are both carriers of the Tay-Sachs gene, which means they have a one-in-four chance of bearing a child with the disease. Tay-Sachs is a particularly horrific, painful degenerative disease that results in death by the time the child is four years old. There is no cure. Given these high statistics and the horrors of the disease, should Leonard and Rachel refrain from having biological children? Give arguments to support your answer.

Case #2: Adulterous Affair

Tom has been having an affair with his secretary, Francine, for about a year now, but both decide to end it. Francine leaves the company and gets a job in another state. Tom doesn't think that his wife, Carol, knows about the affair, but he feels very guilty and wonders whether he ought to be honest about it and tell her. He doesn't intend to have another affair and he loves Carol and their three children very much. Yet he has strong feelings of guilt and an urge to confess his adultery to Carol. Carol notices how preoccupied Tom is and asks him if there is anything wrong. What should Tom do?

Case #3: Family Forever?

For as long as Brandon can remember, his parents have told him he will take over the family business one day. They are supportive, loving parents, and they are paying for Jack's education, ensuring that he will be well equipped to run things by the time his parents are ready to retire. It is understood that after college he will move home, and that he will care for his parents, both emotionally and financially, as they age. The problem is, Brandon finds his business classes terribly boring, and would like to be an music major instead. Although he loves his family, he does not want the role his parents have planned out for him; he finds his hometown to be small and oppressive, and he'd like to travel and live in many different places, having experiences well outside of his family circle. At the same time, Brandon feels he owes his parents a great deal, due to all of the advantages they have given him over the years. He feels he would be abandoning them if he doesn't follow their plan. What should Brandon do?

Case #4: Friends With Benefits

Brenda and Greg met as college freshmen. After their first year, they decide they would both like to move out of the dorms but neither can afford to live alone. They enjoy each other's company so decide to become roommates in order to share living expenses. They both casually date other people, but sometimes have sex with each other when it suits both of their needs. Although they have affection for each other, neither is interested in pursuing a romantic relationship, and they both freely admit that their sexual encounters are about physical gratification only. Brenda takes birth control pills and Greg always uses a condom. Are Brenda and Greg behaving morally? Why or why not?

Case #5: Brotherly Help, Author = MILLS

Jack and Molly are adult siblings who have never gotten along. They have nothing in common, and although not openly hostile, they tend to be judgmental of each other's lifestyles. They have never been to each others' homes, and never talk on the phone. They only see each other when they are both home visiting their parents. During their last visit home, Molly asked Jack to loan her money, interest-free, for a down payment on a house. Jack can afford the loan, but doesn't want to give it to her, reasoning that, since he does not have any sort of an emotional relationship with Molly (only a biological one), he has no obligation to loan her money. Is Jack morally obligated to help his sister out?

Case #6: You Are What You Eat

Racist Randy owns a small restaurant near campus. This restaurant has amazing food, good prices, and is so close students are able to eat there between classes. However, Racist Randy makes his racist views very clear, and although he will serve anyone willing to pay, Randy's openly bigoted attitude make people of color feel uncomfortable dining there. Nathan loves the restaurant's food, and is also attracted to the good location and low prices. Choosing not to eat at Racist Randy's means traveling a longer distance and paying more for food he likes less. Should Nathan boycott Racist Randy's? Why?