

Thinking Straight Ethical Reasoning Workshop Week 6.1 (May 6, 2008)

- I A. In small groups** discuss the following issues concerning *Feminism and the Ethics of Care*
1. Do women have a different way of thinking about moral issues than men in your experience? How would you characterize this difference. Are these differences very wide spread (that is, do most women and men exhibit these differences? How significant are the differences (that is, do they represent diametrically opposed views or difference or “merely” difference in style).
 2. Rachels presents Kohlberg’s stages of moral development. What are the six stages? Does this seem like a plausible sequence? Does the Stage of Universal Ethical Principles seem to you to be represent the most mature form of moral understanding?
 3. How does the ethics of care differ from this sixth stage of development presented by Kohlberg.?
 4. Rachels worries about how to reconcile the ethics of care with the ethics of obligation. He considers whether they can both be embraced (p. 170-171). What is your view of how they might be reconciled? If they can’t, which seems to you most attractive?
 5. What is Rachels’ approach to the ethics of care at the end of the chapter?

B. Plenary Discussion

II. *Gone Baby Gone* Discussion.

A. In small group,

- (1) Discuss how a proponent of the ethics of care might analyze decisions made by characters in *Gone Baby Gone*.

B. Plenary

C. In small group

- (2) Discuss What sort of analysis a utilitarian, and Kantian, and a contractarian might give for these decisions.
- (3) Which if any of these analyzes strikes you as most illuminating. If so, why? If not, what additional ethical argument would you give.

D. Plenary



Assignment for next Tuesday, May 13: Read Rachels Ch 12 and handout.

Submit your short essay (at least 2 pages in length) that compares or contrasts ethical assessment of a central choice made in *Gone Baby Gone* in terms of

Utilitarianism, Kantian Ethics, Contractarianism and Ethics of care.

Take care to explain how each ethical theory would judge this choice. Cite references to Rachels, handouts, or other material you might have consulted.