

Edexcel A2 Implications 6RS04: Ethics A workbook and study guide



Unit 4: Implications – Ethics

Contents

			-				
ln	+ r	^	~		^+	in	n
	LI	u	u	u	Lι	ıu	,,,

What is this unit about?	2
How will this workbook help you?	3
What do you have to do in the exam?	4
What is meant by 'religion and human experience'?	5
Useful guidance	6

Anthology passage: Method and moral theory – D. Jamieson

Introducing the passage	/
Overview	8
Questions to consider	12
Consolidation exercises	17
Worksheet activities	18

Anthology passage: Personal relationships – H. LaFollette

Introducing the passage	28
Overview	29
Questions to consider	31
Consolidation exercises	35
Worksheet activities	36

Anthology passage: Modern moral philosophy – J. Schneewind

Introducing the passage	50
Overview	51
Questions to consider	55
Consolidation exercises	59
Worksheet activities	60

End-of-unit quick quiz

Jamieson	70
Lafollette	71
Schneewind	72

1 . 4			
Intro	וואו	CtIO	'n
HILLIC	JUU	GUIG	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,

What is this unit about?

In this unit of the A2 Religious Studies course you will study **three** passages from the Edexcel GCE Religious Studies Anthology, and in the exam you will answer a question on an extract from **one** of those passages. The complete anthology can be downloaded from the Edexcel website:

http://www.edexcel.com/migrationdocuments/GCE%20New%20GCE/anthology-gce-rs.pdf

Unit 4: Implications is designed to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills that you have developed in Units 1, 2 and 3. You will *examine*:

- what scholars have written about key areas in ethics
- how their ideas relate to other areas you have studied during your course
- key terms, ideas and issues raised by the passages you will study
- how the passages for study relate to each other.

You will also consider *implications*, in terms of how far particular beliefs and values might affect your own and other people's understanding or awareness of:

- religion: including specific religious individuals, groups or communities, as well as the pursuit
 of religious or spiritual goals that are not unique to a particular religion
- human experience: the wider experience of life that is shared by all people on the basis of their common humanity, irrespective of any religious beliefs or values they may hold.

A useful way of thinking of this is in terms of consequences or outcomes, for example:

- the consequences of holding certain opinions, views or beliefs, including your own
- how a particular belief or value could affect other people, either for good or ill
- how other people's lives might be affected if a certain belief were widely held or a certain value widely applied.

You can also think of implications as a 'So what?' question; 'If X is right to argue Y, then so what?' Who cares? Does it matter? To whom? Why?

110105		

Notes

How will this workbook help you?

This workbook covers the three passages set for the Ethics option. It will help you:

- understand the key ideas in each of the passages so that you understand what each writer is arguing
- · get to grips with the terminology used
- find and develop links with other units of the course
- decide to what extent you agree with the claims made by the writer of each passage
- understand the implications for religion and for human experience of the ideas raised in each text.

There are no right answers in this unit and the examiners expect to see a wide range of responses in the exam. Answers should include anything relevant which arises from a scholarly discussion of the passages, and the examiner will have no preconceived idea of how you should respond. This workbook is intended to help you understand the passages and their key ideas and to learn to make links for yourself. As you work through the passages in class or by yourself, you will find many more connections and raise many more implications than will be covered here, and that is exactly as it should be. As a workbook, it is not intended to be prescriptive or to show you the only way to approach this unit, but to offer you some starting points to get going, or help to start you off again if you run out of inspiration!

Please note that neither Edexcel nor its representatives can provide answers to the questions offered in this workbook, which are intended as a stimulus when working through these passages. It is up to you to think about the questions, reach your own conclusions, and produce answers that you find most persuasive.

lotes		

What do you have to do in the exam?

The examination for this unit is 1 hour 15 minutes long. You will be given an extract from **one** of the passages you have studied from the Anthology and you will answer **one** question on it. The question is in **two** parts and will always be the same. It is deliberately open ended to ensure that a full range of possible responses can be credited:

- (a) Explain the argument and/or interpretation in the passage. (30)
- (b) Do you agree with the idea(s) expressed? Justify your point of view and discuss its implications for understanding religion and human experience. (20)

Notice that part (a) is worth 30 marks, while part (b) is worth 20 marks. In the exam you should aim to spend about 45 minutes answering part (a) and about 30 minutes answering part (b).

The examiner will mark your answer against two Assessment Objectives (AOs).

- AO1: Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use
 of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of
 study. Candidates should also demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the
 connections between different elements of their course of study.
- AO2: Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument. Candidates should also relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to specified aspects of human experience.

AO1 is covered by part (a) of the question and AO2 by part (b). You should treat both parts of the question separately, rather than running them together in one single essay. This will make it easier for the examiner to credit your answer. Good marks for part (a) will derive from being able to express and expand on the ideas in the passage without relying on repeating the wording of the passage itself, using well chosen quotations rather than copying out chunks of text. You should use examples and illustrations and be able to explore the reasoning behind the passage. Good marks for (b) will arise from a balanced discussion and evaluation of the implications of the ideas expressed in the passage and your own response to them.

- Answers may benefit from demonstrating an awareness of the rest of the passage, although this is not essential to reach the highest levels.
- There is no presumption that you should have a detailed knowledge of scholars referenced in passing in the passages.
- You may draw on material from elsewhere in your studies for this qualification.

 	·	
 		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·

What is meant by 'religion and human experience'?

These terms should not confuse you and are not intended to be drawn out separately and specifically. However, as a general guideline you could think of them as incorporating the following ideas. We have left extra space at the end of the table for you to add other ideas as you think of them.

Implications for religion	Implications for human experience Do these ideas have implications for any of the following?:
How may the ideas impact on an individual's beliefs?	Beliefs about life and death
How may they impact on the life of the religious community?	Ethical and moral beliefs
How may believers be called to respond to these ideas?	Society and the wider community
What impact may they have on the role of sacred texts, religious leaders, and central religious doctrines?	Human relationships
How may these ideas impact on the claims a believer may make about the possibility, or reality, of a relationship with a personal God?	What people find important in their lives
	How people interpret the world and their place in it

lotes	 	

Useful guidance ...

It is far better to avoid a 'passage spotting' approach to working with these texts and instead aim for a good understanding of the whole passage, as well as finding links between the three passages. If you rely on 'passage spotting' you will inevitably be disappointed if the passage you want to appear in the exam, or think will be in the exam, is not the one which is used. This will not put you in the right frame of mind for thinking about the passage you *are* asked to write about.

Be reassured, however, that the people who choose the extracts for the exam paper each year do not try to make things difficult for you. They are unlikely to choose extracts which are obscure or which do not include much for you to examine and assess. Passages which include lists of names or dates, bullet points, multiple quotations from other sources, references to other chapters or sections of the book from which the passage is drawn, or which offer little substantive content, are not going to do a good job for you or them. The most interesting and engaging extracts, and those which allow you to explore a range of issues, are more likely to appear on the exam paper than those which limit you before you have even started.

Notes	

Anthology Passage: METHOD AND MORAL THEORY

'Method and moral theory' by D. Jamieson

Introducing the passage

This passage offers an interesting review of how traditional moral theoretical approaches to ethics have changed in recent years, from a dominant conception of moral theory as a means of categorizing actions and their agents to the use of examples in moral philosophy. Although much of this article can be directly linked with issues you will have studied in other AS and A2 papers, it does offer special challenges by introducing you to key ideas in moral philosophy which you may not have expected to consider – foundationalism and coherentism, for example. The article also includes names of moral philosophers, and although some of these will be familiar, many will not.

It is important that you don't panic about this since, as explained in the Introduction (on page 4), there is no assumption that in the exam you will comment on every scholar named in an extract. As you work through the article you can, to a large extent, ignore lists of names, and focus on those which are familiar, or where the argument associated with them is clearly central to understanding the passage as a whole. You will simply slow down your progress through the article if you spend too long on finding out, and then writing, about people who are mentioned, just to show that you can! The guidance questions which follow the overview are intended to help you understand the most important ideas contained in Jamieson's passage, and *not* with following up on the details and the thinking of each scholar mentioned in the text. Do approach the questions with this in mind. Of course, you are free to find out more about these scholars if you choose, and your teacher may ask you to do that, but remember: the examiner will not be following a mark scheme that awards credit for how much you know about the views of any named scholar.

You will have studied topics at AS and A2 which will help your understanding of this passage:

- All ethical theories at AS and A2
- The relationship between religion and morality (AS and A2)
- Ethical language.

We'll start with a general overview of the passage.

 		 	

Matag

Overview

Introduction (page 134)

- Contemporary moral philosophers have explored many questions which reveal that their
 major interest is now less in exploring questions about moral theory and more in exploring
 questions in moral theory.
- This change in focus has arisen from changing conceptions about moral theories, which are now seen to be less uniform and universally applicable.

The nature of moral theories (pages 134–36)

The dominant conception

- The dominant conception of moral theories suggests they are abstract structures that sort actions, agents and outcomes into categories. For the moral theorist, the job is to make these theories apply universally and persuasively.
- Typically, theoretical moral reasoning tends to reflect legal or economic reasoning.
- This work is largely implicit rather than explicit and not all moral theoretic philosophers endorse every feature of the dominant conception.

The anti-theorists

- Anti-theoretical challenges to the dominant conception are characteristic of the latter half of the 20th century, although they have their roots in the work of Aristotle and Hume.
- Anscombe's attack on the dependency of moral philosophy on the notion of a divine lawgiver
 was particularly influential, whilst McIntyre and Williams challenged the spurious authority on
 which moral theories are based. They maintained that moral philosophy posed cultural
 problems rather than offered solutions.
- Williams and Anscombe both argue that morality, as understood by many philosophers, should be abolished. However, whilst Anscombe focuses on rejecting theistic ethics, Williams claims that we can only be free in a secular society when free of the bondage of morality. Feminist critiques have also challenged the dominant conception.
- As a result, the relationship between moral theory and practice needs to be reviewed.

Reconciling theory and practice

 Moral theorizing goes on in everyday life as a means of resolving moral problems, but rarely, if ever, leads to the creation of a moral theory. Moral theorizing is instead part of moral practice.

_			

Notes

- Moral theories derive from moral theorizing but, as the anti-theorists observe, they are rarely used for making moral decisions.
- However, when we evaluate the moral theorizing of ourselves and others, those evaluations
 do have some effect on moral practice.
- Anti-theorists argue that everyday moral practice creates moral theory, but moral theories cannot reveal the moral truth.

Check that:

- ✓ you understand the difference between moral theory and moral practice;
- ✓ you understand why Jamieson suggests that the 'dominant conception' of moral theories has undergone a change
- ✓ you understand the dominant conception of moral theory
- ✓ you understand the challenges posed to the dominant conception by Williams and Anscombe
- ✓ you understand the claim that moral practice creates moral theory
- ✓ you understand why these views are open to extended discussion and evaluation.

The methods of theorizing (pages 137–39)

Although moral theorizing is more likely to be 'eclectic and incremental', philosophers have attempted to identify principles and methods which underlie it, appealing frequently to epistemology to provide a model.

Foundationalism

- Foundationalism is the view that beliefs are justified by virtue of their relationship to other beliefs which themselves require no justification. This is an attractive position because it seems that at some point, a chain of justification must end.
- This position poses a problem in so far as how some beliefs can require no justification. Traditionally, such beliefs are considered self-justifying or self-evident.
- Difficulties are posed by attempting to derive a moral theory from self-evident truths, since there is inevitably disagreement as to which truths are self-evident.
- Foundationalism in ethics has always been problematic because of a lack of sense-data.

Coherentism

- Coherentism is the view that beliefs can be justified only by their relationship to other beliefs.
- Rawls suggested it may be possible to reach equilibrium, but this can be challenged on the basis that some beliefs may be in equilibrium and yet not constitute a true moral theory.

- Attempting to identify objective moral truths also poses problems as we cannot establish with reliability if they are foundational or coherent.
- Other philosophers have posed derivationism, which focuses on questions regarding rationality rather than morality.

Other questions of method

- A key issue continues to be whether moral theory can or must be revisionary, and how far foundationalism and coherentism serve to complement each other.
- Moral theories must be consistent and complete enough to provide a moral perspective in other words, they must be broad enough to apply to a range of moral problems.
- Both foundationalists and coherentists are drawn to the notion of intuition as the means by
 which we identify a set of moral beliefs. Thus they are interested in how we can identify and
 assess moral intuitions. The role of examples in moral philosophy has proved to be central to
 this discussion.

Check that:

- √ you understand the meaning of foundationalism
- ✓ you understand the meaning of coherentism
- √ you understand how these may relate to consideration of moral theorizing
- ✓ you understand how intuition may be thought to play an important role in moral theorizing.

The role of examples (pages 139-40)

- Examples are used in moral philosophy in order to show how appeals to principles may be applied to particular cases.
- Four types of examples are typically used: literary; ostensive; hypothetical and imaginary. An
 important distinction needs to be made between hypothetical and imaginary examples.
 Hypothetical examples involve using situations or events which may have occurred or could
 occur. Imaginary examples involve possibilities which could only occur in worlds other than
 ours.
- Imaginary examples are less useful than hypothetical examples and our intuitions about them are untrustworthy, as shown by Michael Tooley's example which depends on conceiving of a world in which it is possible to transform kittens into people. The example becomes overburdened with unhelpful questions which prevent the real issue from being addressed.

	 	_

Check that:

- ✓ you understand what it means to speak of using examples in moral philosophy
 ✓ you understand the difference between hypothetical and imaginary examples in moral philosophy
- ✓ you understand the problems raised by the use of imaginary examples.

Notes		

Questions to consider

Introduction (page 134)

- Why have moral philosophers demonstrated an interest in these areas: (i) moral language;
 (ii) value and obligation; (iii) normative theories; (iv) duties concerning animals and future generations?
- Identify key philosophers and approaches which you associate with these areas.
- What implications may be raised for (i) religion and (ii) human experience by these areas of interest?
- Which of these areas do you think is most important for modern moral philosophers to address? Explain your answer.
- Explain the difference between questions *about* moral theory and questions *in* moral theory.
- What does it mean to speak of moral theories as 'abstract structures whose role is to supply justification rather than motivation?
- Explain the reference to coherentism (see page 138). (NB: You would not be obliged to pick up on this reference to coherentism in a response to this section in an exam, but it is useful to understand the term, as it is important later.)
- Do you agree that 'the intellectual landscape is not as uniform as it once was'? Give reasons for your answer. Do you think this is a good or a bad thing? What are the implications of your view for (i) religion and (ii) human experience?
- Why might it be argued that moral theories have little role to play in practical reasoning?
- Why do you think Michael Stocker (no need to look him up elsewhere) argued that modern moral theory is 'schizophrenic'?
- What does it mean to describe modern moral philosophy as 'serving up a cafeteria of conflicting moralities'? What are the implications for (i) religion and (ii) human experience if this is the case?

The nature of moral theories (pages 134–36)

The dominant conception

- Explain the dominant conception of moral theory.
- What is the significance of terms such as 'virtuous', 'right', 'wrong', 'permitted' or 'obligatory'?
 What problems for moral philosophy are posed by their use?

Notes

- Explain briefly how different moral theories interpret different categories such as good or right.
- Identify how one or more moral theorists have tried to make moral theories universal and 'coercive'. Have they been successful? What may be the implications of this approach?
- How may law and/or economics help to understand the role and application of moral theories? (If there are A-level economists in the class, their help will be useful. Don't worry about this question if you are not sure about it.)

The anti-theorists

- Why may a 'law conception of ethics' be unattractive to Elizabeth Anscombe?
- Do you agree that modern moral philosophy is 'untenable without the notion of a divine lawgiver'?
- Has modern moral philosophy banished God? If so, is this a good thing or a bad thing?
- What are the implications of this position for (i) religion and (ii) human experience?
- Do you agree that a 'divine command' approach to ethics is 'anachronistic'?
- Why do you think Anscombe uses the analogy of the criminal courts here? Is it effective?
 Give reasons for your answer.
- Do you think it is true to say that there can be 'no moral authority in pluralistic, liberal societies'? What are the implications of adopting this position?
- What problems posed by moral philosophy are identified by McIntyre and Williams (bottom of page 135)? Which do you think is the most significant and why?
- What are the two different reasons for which Anscombe and Williams seek to abolish morality? Do you find either or both persuasive? Give reasons for your answer.
- What are the implications (i) for religion and (ii) for human experience, of the claim that 'we can be free to live our own lives in a truly secular society only when we have overcome the bondage of morality'?
- How might a Christian respond to this claim? (focus on the concept of being in 'bondage' to morality).
- Do you agree that men and women have different patterns of moral response? Give reasons for your answer. What are the implications of this feminist view and of challenges to it?

 	 	_

Reconciling theory and practice

- What does Jamieson mean when he claims that 'moral theorizing is something that real people do in everyday life'? Is this true? Give reasons for your answer.
- What moral theories may be implicit in this process of 'moral theorizing'?
- How might LaFollette respond to the observation that 'we condemn a friend for not acting as a friend'?
- Why do you think that moral theorizing 'hardly ever leads to the creation of a full-blown moral theory'?
- What does Jamieson mean by 'pragmatic considerations'?
- Do you agree that 'moral theorizing typically emerges when there is a conversational niche for it to fill'? What does this mean? Give examples to illustrate this idea? What implications may arise from this habit?
- How successful do you think this process is? Do we establish moral practice on the basis of such theorizing?
- Why, do you think, we evaluate our moral theorizing and that of others?
- In what way, if at all, do fragments of moral theory impact on our moral practices?
- Do you agree with Jamieson that the anti-theorists are not justified in their claim that we do not need moral theory? Give reasons for your answer.

The methods of theorizing (pages 137–39)

Foundationalism

- Explain what is meant by 'foundationalism'.
- Do you think Jamieson's example of a foundationalist belief is useful? Give reasons for your answer. Suggest other examples.
- Is it possible to arrive at any foundationalist principles in ethics? What obstacles may stand in the way? Are they surmountable?
- How could it be that 'some beliefs require no justification'?
- What implications might there be for religion if there are no foundational ethical principles?
- Could ethical beliefs be either or both self-justifying or self-evident?

•	What does Jamieson mean by the claims that foundationalism in ethics is particularly
	problematic because 'it was never clear what was to do the work of sense-data'? How might
	your studies of ethical language help here? If you have studied the work of the Logical
	Positivists, explain how they might have responded to this observation.

Coherentism

- Explain what is meant by coherentism. Distinguish between a coherence theory of truth and a correspondence theory of truth.
- Do you think that ethical beliefs are more likely to be coherently true than foundationalist?
 Give reasons for your answer. What implications may arise from taking this position?
- Explain Rawls' method of reflective equilibrium. Give examples of how this may happen during moral theorizing.
- Do you agree with the challenges made by Brandt, Hare and Singer (in as far as they are mentioned here in passing)? What other examples could be offered as a challenge to ethical coherentism?
- How far might coherentism be compatible with emotivism?
- Why is the question of 'how moral truths are to be identified' such a key issue in moral philosophy?
- Explain what you understand by the attempt to 'derive a moral theory from ... more fundamental considerations concerning rationality'.
- Is rationality a good basis on which to determine moral principles? Give reasons for your answer. Which scholars may agree/disagree with this position? What are the implications for (i) religion and (ii) human experience from adopting this position?

Other questions of method

- What do you think Jamieson means by 'common sense morality'? Does such a thing exist? Is it likely to be reliable? On what grounds might it be established?
- What does it mean to describe a moral belief as 'privileged'? Offer examples of how this may be illustrated.
- What implications for (i) religious and (ii) human experience may arise from the view 'that (some of) our everyday moral beliefs should be revised or rejected...'?
- On what grounds might a foundationalist morality be conservative? On what grounds might it not be conservative?
- For what reasons must a moral theory be (i) consistent and (ii) complete?

- What do you think is meant by 'moral intuition'? Why should moral philosophers be interested in 'identifying and assessing the intuitions with which we begin'?
- What problems for foundationalism does the role of intuition pose?
- For what reasons will intuitions play different roles in foundationalist and coherentist theories?

The role of examples (pages 139-40)

- Suggest an instance (other than one given) of how Kant's categorical imperative might be tested by use of examples.
- Explain the four different types of examples identified by O'Neill (as outlined in the passage).
- Give instances of literary examples and ostensive examples. Do you think ostensive examples are always superior?
- Explain the difference between imaginary and hypothetical examples.
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of these different types of examples?
- Give an instance of both types of examples and identify their strengths and weaknesses.
- What implications may arise from using imaginary examples to illustrate the claims of moral theories?
- Why do you think hypothetical examples are necessary for moral reasoning?
- What implications arise from the claim that 'real life is open to different descriptions and interpretations'?
- How effective do you find Tooley's cat example? Explain your reasoning. Attempt an alternative example which you find more persuasive.
- Do you think Jamieson is right to say that the cat example forces us into unnecessary speculation which goes beyond the purpose of the example?

votes		

N7 - 4 - -

Consolidation exercises

- 1. Write short paragraphs which unpack the issues identified by Jamieson in the first paragraph: (i) moral language; (ii) value and obligation; (iii) normative theories; (iv) duties concerning animals and future generations. Make sure you know how you could use these in an exam response to the first paragraphs of Jamieson's article.
- 2. Write a short paragraph explaining the dominant conception of moral theory. Make sure you can have this ready for use in an exam.
- 3. Write a paragraph explaining how the problems raised by ethical language contribute to the problems faced by an understanding of moral theory.
- 4. Prepare a paragraph on the implications of rejecting a 'divine command' or theistic approach to moral theory. Use your material from AS and A2 here; the relationship between religion and morality and critiques of it.
- 5. Prepare a paragraph explaining the ways in which we engage in moral theorizing in everyday life and a paragraph outlining the implications of this habit. For example, does it lead us to make moral judgments about situations we know little about?
- 6. Write a paragraph outlining how the issues raised by a study of ethical language might help or hinder Jamieson's interpretation of the changing role of moral theory. Work out how you could use it in an exam answer.
- 7. Outline ways in which you think the moral theories you have studied are (i) consistent and (ii) complete.
- 8. Prepare a paragraph outlining how important and effective you feel the use of examples can be in moral theory.
- 9. Write an extended paragraph summarising Jamieson's whole article and another paragraph summarising the key implications arising from it.

Votes		

D. Jamieson: 'Method and moral theory' – Worksheet

Explain the key points of the following paragraphs.

	T
Introduction	
The nature of moral theories	
The dominant conception	
The anti-theorists	

Reconciling theory and practice	
The methods of theorizing	
Foundationalism	
Coherentism	

Other questions of	
method	
The role of examples	
Mhat is the conclusion that Is	misson reaches? Is it belonged and fair and supported by suidenes?

What is the conclusion that Jamieson reaches? Is it balanced and fair and supported by evidence?

Which aspects of Jamieson's arguments are facts and which are his opinions OR the opinions of others?

Facts	e.g. 'Foundationalism is the view that systems of belief are justified in virtue of the logical relations'	What evidence supports these facts?	What evidence may be used to counter these facts?

Opinions	e.g. 'Nor is it obvious that foundationalism must serve the cause of moral progress.'	What support may be given to Jamieson's opinions?	What challenges may be made to these opinions?

What other material from my AS and A2 studies (including all subjects) can I use in my answer to support and/or oppose Jamieson's interpretation?
Which scholars and quotations can I utilise in my answer that are not directly alluded to in this passage?
Is there anything I can use from the Bible and/or other religious texts?

Vhich claims/observations of Jamieson's do I support, and why?	Which claims of Jamieson's do I challenge, and why?

If Jamieson's observations are right, then what are the implications for the following?:
(i) Believers and non-believers in God
(ii) The study of moral philosophy
(ii) The study of moral philosophy
(iii) Daily moral decision-making

Is it possible for Jamieson's interpretation to be wrong? If so, what are the implications for the following?:
(i) Believers and non-believers in God
(ii) The study of moral philosophy
(ii) The study of moral philosophy
(iii) Daily moral decision-making

What do you think is the strongest aspect of Jamieson's interpretation? What is the weakest?
Taking everything into account, do you agree or disagree with the conclusions drawn at different stages of Jamieson's article? Give your reasons.
Taking everything into account, do you agree or disagree with the conclusions drawn at different stages of Jamieson's article. Give your reasons.

Anthology passage: PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

'Personal relationships' by H. LaFollette

Introducing the passage

This passage is perhaps the most accessible in the Ethics anthology. It is highly readable, and the subject is easy to grasp. The central question – does our commitment to personal relationships make it impossible for us to be impartially moral? – is systematically argued in a clear evaluative style, and LaFollette's use of scholarship is effective and simple to grasp. Although at first glance it seems that there is little relationship between this passage and the topics you have studied for AS and A2 Ethics, you will soon see how the argument explored by LaFollette is helped by an examination of different ethical theories and how they may aid the process of moral decision-making. The use of examples helps to unpack the argument and reflects the use of thought experiments or moral exemplars you may have already used in class to help evaluate ethical theories.

One of the real advantages of this passage is that you can draw on many examples, not only from Ethics but from other subjects as well. History, politics, sociology, psychology and even day-to-day events in the news can help you to illustrate your understanding of this passage.

The passage is originally from *Personal Relationships: Love, Identity and Morality* by Hugh LaFollette (Blackwell, 1995). The Edexcel Anthology uses a version from *A Companion to Ethics,* edited by Peter Singer (Blackwell, 2001) but you may find it interesting to read the whole chapter in LaFollette's original text.

Several key topics from the Ethics specification will help you here:

- All ethical theories at AS and A2
- The relationship between religion and morality at AS and A2
- Sexual Ethics (AS)
- Justice, law and punishment (A2)
- Ethical language (A2)

We'll begin with a general overview of the passage.

Overview

Morality and personal relationships: Do they conflict? (pages 142–44)

- Morality and personal relationships appear to conflict, since morality requires us to be impartial and treat everyone equally unless there is a 'general and morally relevant difference' justifying different treatment.
- However, we behave towards intimates differently to the way we behave towards strangers.
 We give them preferential care and expect the same in return. How can we explain/justify this?
- Must we treat everyone equally or should we treat everyone unequally?
- Treating everyone equally is not a substantive moral principle. It is a formal principle which
 expects equality unless there is a general and relevant reason for treating someone
 differently.
- What is such a 'general and relevant' reason? A close relationship, perhaps?
- It seems, therefore, that the moral rule that justifies partiality is impartial. Therefore, we can treat intimates better than strangers.
- Intimacy promotes care, patience and loyalty which are significant moral values. Such values
 are best promoted in intimate relationships. It is, therefore, right to treat intimates with
 preference
- However, there are higher principles than preferential treatment for intimates: 'Universal love is a higher ideal than family loyalty.'
- Some have special duties of care teachers, doctors, parents and so on. These duties are higher than impersonal obligations. They give preferential treatment to those under their care, even though they are not intimates.
- Parents should only give limited preferential treatment to their children.
- Impartiality enables us to fight racism and sexism, whilst limited partiality enables us to spread our attention beyond our friends and family.
- Morality should fight to diminish the undesirable effects of luck and bad fortune.
- However, do parents only care for children because of a moral obligation? What about love?
 What about the benefits of close relationships care, self-worth, affection? 'Friends don't want that sort of impersonal care; they want to be loved for who they are.'

Notes

Therefore, is it right to save your wife rather than a stranger? Surely there is no need to
justify this by reference to impartial moral principles. Thus, 'moral standards will occasionally
be trumped by our personal projects.'

Check that:

- ✓ you understand the difference between partiality and impartiality
- ✓ you understand how different ethical theories may support these approaches to morality
- √ you understand the concept of prima facie relationships and preferential care
- ✓ you understand the advantages and disadvantages of these approaches, both to moral decision-making and the development of moral attitudes
- ✓ you understand the controversies arising from these different positions.

The interplay of morality and personal relationships (pages 144–45)

- Moral knowledge and understanding comes from intimate personal relationships.
- Those reared without intimate relationships will not know how to look after or promote the
 interests of others: 'We cannot promote interests we cannot identify... we learn to identify
 through interaction with others.'
- True intimacy cannot exist in an immoral environment. Intimates must be honest and trustworthy: 'A person must have some exposure to personal relationships to be motivated to be moral or to know how to be moral.'

Check that:

- ✓ you understand how LaFollette resolves the dilemma posed by the two demands
 of morality
- ✓ you are able to evaluate his conclusion that partial and impartial morality have a relationship of dependency.

Matag

Questions to consider

Moral and Personal Relationships: Do they conflict? (pages 142-44)

- What is the main concern addressed by LaFollette in this section?
- What is meant by the words/phrases; 'impartiality', 'intimates', 'substantive moral principle'?
- LaFollette suggests that people should be treated alike 'unless there is some general and morally relevant difference'. What does he mean? Can you give an example?
- Lafollette suggests that we should give intimates preferential care. Do you agree? Do you think it is right that 'we expect it in return'? Give an example to support your view. Do you think that personal relationships are partial or impartial? Give reasons for your answer.
- Why does LaFollette believe there is a conflict between morality and personal relationships?
 Is he right? Explain your answer.
- Do you agree with LaFollette when he suggests that 'the demands of personal relationships supersede those of morality'? Give reasons for your answer.
- What does he mean when he says that 'the principle of equal consideration of interests is not a substantive moral principle?' Is he right?
- Do you agree with the view that morality 'allows (requires?) everyone to treat intimates better than they treat strangers?' Can you think of any exceptions to this? What is the significance of placing 'requires' in brackets?
- LaFollette suggests that values such as honesty, caring and loyalty are 'best promoted by intimate relationships.' What does he mean and is he right?
- LaFollette suggests that 'we should treat all intimates the same unless there is some general and relevant reason that justifies a difference in treatment.' Do you agree and what might be a reason for giving different treatment?
- What does he mean when he talks about 'the apparent tension between morality and selfinterest'?
- LaFollette suggests that 'impartiality undermines personal relationships'. What do you think he means by this? Can you give an example?
- LaFollette cites Rachels' observation that 'Universal love is a higher ideal than family loyalty.' What does he mean? Do you agree?
- In what sense may people have 'special duties to others'?

Motos

- Do you agree that 'role-specific duties are ... stronger than general impersonal obligations'? In what ways, and why?
- Do you agree that a doctor's duty to his/her own patients should take precedence over the medical needs of strangers? Should this always be the case? Under what circumstances may it arguably not apply?
- How does Rachels explain the difference between the obligations of a doctor and the obligations of a parent?
- Why does Rachels feel that parents cannot ignore the needs of less well-off children?
- Does Rachels support or oppose partial personal relationships? Why?
- Rachels claims that 'the demands of morality are always superior'. What does he mean and is he right?
- What scholars and arguments have you encountered in your studies that would help you to support/ oppose the views in this passage?
- What does Rachels mean by saying that egoism, racism and sexism are 'morally odious'? Is this a generally agreed view? Give reasons for your answer.
- Do you agree with the view expressed in paragraph 9 that luck plays a large part in determining a person's lot in life and that 'morality should attempt to diminish, if not eradicate, the undesirable effects of luck.' How would this be achieved?
- What, according to LaFollette, are the 'undesirable consequences' of Rachels' views?
- Should personal relationships be founded on moral principles or on love?
- What does it mean to say that personal relationships 'heighten our sense of self-worth?' Is this always true?
- What would be the implications for humanity if the scenario described were the case?
- What does it mean to say that 'commitment to impartial moral theory seems to preclude the love for which humans yearn'? Is this true?
- What is the main thrust of the argument in these paragraphs?
- What does it mean to say that 'personal relationships and morality inevitably conflict and, at least on some occasions, morality loses'?
- Do you agree with Williams' view that a rescuer should always save his wife rather than a stranger? Can you think of any exceptions to this?
- What does it mean to talk of a rescuer saving his wife as reflecting a properly basic belief?

- The writer suggests that 'moral principle can legitimate his preference'. From your studies, can you offer any examples of moral principles that might support or oppose this view? Why?
- What is meant by the phrase 'moral standards will occasionally be trumped by our personal projects'?
- Do you agree with the view that 'if life is to be meaningful, we cannot guide our lives by impartial moral principles.' Give reasons for your answer, with examples.

The interplay of morality and personal relationships (pages 144–45)

- What are the main views expressed in this section?
- What does LaFollette mean when he suggests that 'close personal relationships empower us to develop an impersonal morality'?
- In what sense do you think that 'intimacy flourishes in an environment which recognizes the impersonal demands of all'? Is this right?
- What are 'moral knowledge' and 'empathy'?
- Do you agree with LaFollette's view that someone reared by uncaring parents will not know how to promote the interests of others'? Give reasons for your answer.
- Can people behave morally for reasons other than those LaFollette suggests? What about religious obligations? Give examples to support your views.
- Do you think that personal interaction with intimates is as crucial to moral behaviour as LaFollette suggests? Give reasons for your answer, with examples.
- Do you agree with LaFollette's view that if we have experienced the pain of intimates then
 we are more likely to do something about it with strangers? Explain your answer.
- How would the ethicists you have encountered in your studies respond to LaFollette's view?
- What are LaFollette's main arguments in this section?
- What do the following phrases mean: 'non-moral people'; 'subculture built on dishonesty and deceit' and 'mistrust squelches honesty'?
- Do you agree that 'intimates must be honest with one another'? Give reasons for your answer.
- Is LaFollette right to suggest that 'if people are dishonest with large numbers of people at work, then they will be similarly inclined at home'?

Matag

- Is it fair to say, as LaFollette suggests, that 'trust cannot survive, let alone flourish, in an environment of distrust and hate'? Can you offer examples for and against?
- What is the difference between 'amoral' and 'immoral'?
- What does LaFollette mean when he says the relationships of immoral/amoral people will 'not be personal in the relevant sense'? Is he right?
- Do you think it is true that 'experience and involvement in close relationships will enhance one's interest in and sympathy for the plight of others'? Explain your answer.
- What does LaFollette mean by the phrase 'intimacy can flourish only in a society which recognizes the demands of the impersonal other'?
- How would the ethicists you have encountered in your studies respond to LaFollette's claims here?
- LaFollette suggests that if we treated everyone impartially then 'we couldn't develop the knowledge or motivation which enables us to act morally'. What do you think he means? Can you offer examples for and against?
- Do you agree that 'partiality which regularly disregards strangers while heaping trivial benefits on intimates is not justified?' Give reasons for your answer. What might a millionaire say?
- LaFollette suggests that morality is difficult, but not impossible. In the light of your studies of different ethical theories, how far do you agree with this, and why?
- What would be the implications for humanity if LaFollette's views are right?
- Do you think LaFollette tells us anything in this passage that we don't already know? Explain your answer.

Notes	 	 	

Consolidation exercises

- 1. Write a paragraph explaining the key ideas in LaFollette's article, and which you could use to start off an exam answer on any extract from the passage.
- 2. Write a paragraph explaining how and why *one* ethical theory supports an impartial approach to morality.
- 3. Write a paragraph explaining how and why *one* ethical theory supports a partial approach to morality.
- 4. Now produce a paragraph explaining (i) how this distinction in the application of ethical theories is not as simple as it may initially sound, and (ii) why the use of ethical theories may not be particularly helpful in solving the dilemmas raised by LaFollette.
- 5. Write a series of short paragraphs using examples of real-life (not fictional or made up) ethical dilemmas which expose the problem of impartial v. partial morality. For example, you may consider the question of saviour siblings, stem cell therapy, assisted suicide, civil partnerships or environmental issues. Make use of newspapers and other forms of news media to find information about these issues and how they can be used to examine and clarify LaFollette's argument.
- 6. Find out about feral children and/or other cases of child neglect and write a paragraph supporting or challenging LaFollette's argument that we need partial relationships to develop partial morality. Consider whether cases of abducted or isolated children (such as the Fritzl case in Germany) could be used to support LaFollette's arguments.
- 7. Write a paragraph explaining whether you are more in support of Williams' or Rachels' views on the role of morality. Give reasons for your answer.
- 8. Write a paragraph considering whether LaFollette is right to argue that we *learn* morality. In your opinion, is he justified in drawing an analogy with learning football or mathematics?
- 9. Write a paragraph explaining how far you think it is possible to accept LaFollette's conclusion that conflicts between partial and impartial morality will continue to be inevitable, but that ultimately it only shows that morality is difficult, but not impossible, to achieve. Explain how you think most people ultimately live with that difficulty.

Motos

H. LaFollette: 'Personal relationships' – Worksheet

Identify the key points of the following sections:

Morality and personal relationships: Do they conflict?	

The interplay of morality and personal relationships		
·		
What is LaFollette's conclusion	n to the problem he has been attempting to resolve?	1
La. Silono d somoldolor		

Which aspects of LaFollette's arguments are facts and which are his opinions?

Facts	e.g. 'Parentshave special assigned roles.'	What evidence supports these facts?	What evidence may be used to counter these facts?

Opinions	e.g. 'Morality and personal relationships appear to conflict.'	What evidence supports these opinions?	What evidence may be used to counter these opinions

Which aspects of Rachels' arguments are facts and which are opinions?

Facts	What evidence supports these facts?	What evidence may be used to counter these facts

Opinions	What evidence supports these opinions?	What evidence may be used to counter these opinions

what aspects of my A-level Religious Studies course can I use in my answer to support and/or oppose LaFollette's views?
What scholars' views and quotations can I use?
·

How would the following ethical theories address the different positions considered by LaFollette?

LaFollette	Utilitarianism/ Situation Ethics	Deontology	Natural Moral Law
'Morality should attempt to diminish, if not eradicate, the undesirable effects of luck.' (paragraph 4, page 143)			
'Morality requireswe must treat all humans alike unless there is some general and morally relevant difference.' (paragraph 1, page 142)			
'All spouses should treat their intimates better than they treat others.' (paragraph 4, page 142)			

'Someone reared by uncaring parentswill simply not know how to look after or promote the interests of either intimates or strangers.' (paragraph 7, page 144)		
'No-one knows how to consider the interests of others unless they have been in an intimate relationship.' (paragraph 7, page 144)		
'People cannot be just or moral in a vacuum.' (paragraph 3, page 145)		

How would Lafollette address the following moral dilemmas?

How would you respond? Why?

• The boat is sinking, I can only save one person: either my 90 year-old-grandmother or a child I do not know.

• I am a millionaire and I fund an orphanage overseas. My daughter wants me to pay for some very expensive cosmetic surgery operations to enable her to become a beautiful film star. To do this, I will have to stop supporting the orphanage. What should I do?

• I had an unhappy childhood and was abused by my parents. Should I have children of my own?

• The man living next door has won millions on the lottery. I am poor and have no food. He drops a £20 note without realising it. Should I keep it?

• I am a doctor making an urgent home visit to a sick patient. On the way, a serious accident occurs in front of me. Should I stop to help those who are injured?

• My religious beliefs lead me to hold that it is wrong to have a blood transfusion. My son has been in an accident and needs a transfusion to save his life. Should I give permission for the transfusion, or refuse it?

• I am a teacher writing a university reference for one of my students. Should I tell the university that she is a hard-working student when really she is very lazy?

My parents have always been loving and kind to me. They want me to stop smoking. Should I do so?

Which claims of LaFollette can I support, and why?	Which claims of LaFollette can I oppose, and why?

If LaFollette's conclusions are right, then what are the implications for the following?:
(i) People in general
(ii) Religious believers
What are the implications if LaFollette's conclusions are wrong?

What do you think is the strongest aspect of LaFollette's argument? What is the weakest?
What are the most convincing ethical theories that you have found from your studies that (a) support and (b) oppose LaFollette's views?
Overall, do you agree or disagree with LaFollette? Give your reasons.

Anthology passage: MODERN MORAL PHILOSOPHY

'Modern moral philosophy' by J. Schneewind

Introducing the passage

This engaging passage gives you a tour of the development of moral philosophy and should help you to make links with material you have already studied in your AS and A2 Religious Studies course. There are references in this passage to philosophers who you are unlikely to have encountered before at either AS or in the A2 Developments paper. Once again, there is no assumption that you will comment on every scholar named in an extract used in the exam, and there is no problem with focusing on those names which are familiar to you. Where the argument associated with an unfamiliar scholar is clearly central to understanding the article as a whole, then it is obviously very valuable to understand their argument or interpretation, but it only need be within the context of Schneewind's passage, not the context of the named scholar's wider philosophy.

The questions which follow the Overview are intended to help you with understanding the most important ideas contained in Schneewind's passage, and *not* with following up on the details and the thinking of each scholar mentioned in the text. You should approach the questions with this in mind. Of course, you are free to follow these up if you choose, and your teacher may ask you do that, but remember: the examiner will not be following a mark scheme that awards credit for how much you know about the views of any named scholar.

You will enjoy this passage all the more if you can make links with other passages in the Ethics anthology, and although this is not required in order to gain the highest marks, it can only enhance the quality of your answer.

You will already have studied several areas which can help you understand this passage:

- all ethical theories studied for AS and A2
- the relationship between religion and morality (AS and A2)
- justice, law and punishment
- ethical language

We'll begin with an overview of the whole passage.

17 - 4 - -

Overview

Introduction (page 147)

- Moral philosophy in the ancient world focused on the best way to live the virtuous life, whilst Christianity made a direct link between God and goodness. In the modern world neither of these ways of understanding morality seems to be appropriate. Once God or nature are no longer seen to be the source of morality, where do we look for moral guidance?
- Three stages in the development of moral philosophy seem to be evident: (i) morality arises from a source of authority; (ii) morality reflects the awareness that we are self-governing; (iii) the modern focus is towards public rather than individual morality.

Check that:

- √ you understand what approaches to morality are alluded to here: virtue ethics; divine command ethics
- ✓ you understand the problem which arises once divine command ethics is no longer seen as the best way to know what is good
- ✓ you understand the key focus of the three stages outlined by Schneewind.

Toward autonomy (pages 147-50)

- In the 16th century Montaigne observed that it is impossible for most people to live up to Christian standards of morality and the best we can do is to 'find a way of life which our own nature makes necessary for us.'
- Although religion was still understood to be in some way necessary for morality, it could not
 be associated with the divisions of sectarian religion as society became more diversified and
 independent.
- Natural moral law tradition continued to thrive, emphasising a morality which was for everyone's benefit and accessible to all, with humans playing a vital role in a divinely ordained social order in which they could determine their own purposes.
- Grotius was the first to propose that individual rights should be respected within society despite accepting certain limitations on them for the sake of political security.
- Hobbes proposed that we are not naturally sociable but rather that we seek power, but agree to be ruled so there can be peace whilst we pursue our private goals. Only a ruler who is above legal control can prevent our limitless desires from creating a major problem.

Notes

 The 17th century saw the acceptance, amongst proponents of natural law, of a social contract theory which places man rather than God at the centre of power. However, Locke, unlike Grotius and Hobbes, claimed that there are limits to how far the government may limit human rights. Punishment, nevertheless, was necessary if the majority were to behave decently. Morality is still largely imposed on us.

Check that:

- √ you understand the principles of natural moral law
- ✓ you understand the ways in which natural moral law was adapted by political theorists as outlined in the passage
- √ you understand the concept of a social contract
- ✓ you understand the role of law and punishment in public and private morality.
- In the late 17th and early 18th century, the notion developed that morality was an expression
 of our nature. Pierre Bayle (1681) proposed that a group of atheists could form a decent
 society, whilst Shaftesbury observed that we are able to judge our own motives.
 Psychological motivations for our moral conviction lead to questions about the extent of
 human autonomy.
- It was largely agreed that virtue requires that we work for the good of others and even if we act in our own best interests we will be helping others.
- Debates about what is 'good' developed no further than defining 'good' as whatever brings happiness or pleasure, but it was assumed that what we ought to do is a function of what it would be good to bring about.
- Hume proposed that morality moves us to action and so must be rooted in feelings of approval and disapproval. We are often self-interested, but we also have the good of others in mind.
- Justice is not always served, however, although rules of justice need to be followed. We are willing to observe these rules even if sometimes it causes hardship.
- Kant understood morality in terms of duties which arise from a law within free human agents, undetermined by anything outside us. We cannot be genuinely moral if we obey anything other than the law which we ourselves legislate.
- For Kant, the moral law tells us to act in ways which reason could dictate apply to everyone, and which could become a law according to which everyone acts. We must know what is right before we know what is good, and act out of respect for the law we have imposed.

- 	
- 	

Notes

Reid and Bentham furthered the view that a basic principle of morality had to be one which
could be used by everyone alike. Reid proposed that common-sense morality is based on
principles everyone can apply intuitively. Bentham proposed that the utilitarian principle
provided a rational method of moral decision-making, simultaneously producing both general
happiness and our own.

Check that:

- ✓ you understand the concept of morality as self-interest and/or concern about the
 interests of others
- ✓ you understand why impartial morality may not appear to allow for justice
- √ you understand Kant's concept of morality as free and duty-based
- ✓ you understand the quest for a set of moral principles which could be accessible to everyone.

Autonomy and theory: pro and con (pages 150-52)

- Moral philosophy became more of an academic study in the universities after this time, leading to three significant developments.
- Firstly, Bentham's utilitarianism seemed to call for calculations which were beyond the scope
 of most people. Bentham claimed that utilitarianism could lead to conclusions which common
 sense would find unacceptable. Mill argued for a more complex understanding of human
 happiness than Bentham allowed, but he still held that happiness was a matter of settling
 personal preferences. However, not everything that people want is good and only intuition
 can help determine this.
- Other varieties of intuitionism allowed that, through feeling, we can access the realm of real
 values and this enables us to set the direction for right action. This objective view of intuition
 was defended by G. E. Moore, who claimed that we cannot know good from facts.
 Ultimately, intuitionism could not provide a rational method for settling disputes.
- Hegel argued that the moral person is formed by the community in which they live, which
 goes far beyond anything the individual could construct. This view was increasingly shared
 in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, notably by Marx, who observed that the choices
 and principles of the individual have little to contribute to historical development.
- John Dewey observed that although individuals are shaped by their community, they can work together to rationally devise new solutions to problems.
- Nietzsche saw the roots of modern morality as lying in the struggle for dominance which hides behind claims to rational morality.

· 	
	
	·····

Notes

- The rise of logical positivism focused on whether moral beliefs can be empirically tested or whether they are not cognitive claims at all. This led to the assumption that philosophers could not say anything about actual moral problems but that individuals should simply make their own moral decisions. Sartre observed that nothing could be said about morality in general, but each person must make a personal decision and then live, accordingly, 'in good faith'.
- Meta-ethicists went back to exploring the question of whether morality can be rational and, if so, on what grounds. Broadly utilitarian views dominated the 1960s.

Check that:

- ✓ you understand the nature of the conflict between normative ethical theories, such as utilitarianism. and intuitionism
- ✓ you understand the arguments for the view that individual morality is subject to wider influences
- ✓ you understand why the logical positivist perspective rejected the factual value of ethical claims.

New directions (page 153)

- John Rawls revived the Kantian notion that principles of right action can be justified independently of the amount of goodness that action brings about. Rawls argues that morality cannot be structured around the autonomous individual but must involve something like a social contract.
- Schneewind identifies three further developments in modern moral philosophy: focus on social and political problems; a return to virtue-centred ethics; the concern to co-ordinate the behaviour of many individuals in order to achieve morally valuable outcomes. Communities of autonomous individuals are taking precedence in thinking, over validating the choices of the autonomous individuals themselves

Check that:

- ✓ you understand the key ideas of an approach to morality which promotes the notion that right actions need not be identified by the amount of goodness they bring about
- ✓ you understand the new emphasis of modern moral philosophy and can support it with examples.

Votes		

Questions to consider

Introduction (page 147)

- What does the term 'highest good' mean? Do you think that the highest good must inevitably be related to how we choose to live?
- Explain why and how the notion of virtue is important in ethics.
- Do you agree that Christian morality 'complicates' the notion of goodness by linking it with obedience to God? What are the implications of this view for (i) religion and (ii) human experience?
- Do you think it a good or bad thing that 'many people today do not believe... that there is just one definite way of living which is best for everyone'? Explain your answer with examples.
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of attempting to solve moral problems 'on a religious basis'?
- What implications are raised by the question: 'If there is no highest good determined by nature or God, how are we to know whether our desires are misguided or sound'?
- What does it mean to say that 'morality must come from some authoritative source outside of human nature'?
- Explain what it means to describe humans as 'individually self-governing'?
- What 'new issues concerning public morality' do you think moral philosophers are interested in? What issues do you think they should be interested in? Should 'moral philosophers' be concerning themselves with public morality at all? Give reasons for your answer?

Toward autonomy (pages 147–50)

- Do you agree that 'most people' cannot live up to Christian standards of morality? Should people be expected to do so today? Give reasons for your answer.
- What might constitute a 'way of life which our own nature makes necessary for us'? What problems may be posed by this way of understanding morality?
- What problems for moral philosophy were posed by 'an increasingly diversified, self-reliant and literate European population'?
- Why was natural moral law appealing at this time? Do you think it may have any continuing value today? Give reasons for your answer.

Matag

- What are the implications, and for whom, of the view that 'humans [are] created to play a part in a divinely ordained community expressing God's glory'?
- Is it important that in achieving political security our individual rights are respected? What are
 the implications of this not being the case? Use any examples you can think of to illustrate
 your answer from either perspective.
- Do you agree that the need for a sovereign or rules is determined by 'our limitless desires'? What implications may arise from this?
- Do you think that, in the modern world, it is recognised that 'some of our rights are
 unalienable, and hence ... there are moral limits to what governments can do'? Explain your
 answer with examples.
- Do you agree with Locke that 'threats of punishment are needed to get the majority to behave decently'?
- Why was Pierre Bayle's suggestion that 'a group of atheists could form a perfectly decent society' shocking in 1681?
- What is the significance of the view that morality grows out of human feelings? What are the implications of this view for religion and human experience?
- Is it true that 'virtue requires us to work for the good of others'? Give reasons for your answer.
- Does it make sense to argue that 'self-interest... would naturally lead us to virtuous behaviour'?
- Why is the view that 'good ... is whatever gives happiness or pleasure' so important in moral philosophy?
- What 20th-century approach to moral language did Hume anticipate with his observation that approval and disapproval are moral feelings?
- How would LaFollette respond to the observations that (i) 'Though we are often self-interested, we also have desires for the good of others...' and (ii) 'Following the rules of justice does not always bring about a favourable balance of good... for instance, a virtuous impoverished parent returns lost money to a miserly millionaire'?
- For what reasons might it 'benefit society' to have 'an accepted practice of following known rules of justice, even if the practice causes hardship in some cases'? Give examples of when this principle appears to fail.
- Why is moral freedom so important to Kant? What are the implications of his view for divine command ethics?

Why is the concept of duty-based ethics so important to moral philosophy? Notes What are the implications for human experience of morality of Kant's view that we must only act in such a way as would be permitted for everyone to act? What are the implications for human experience of morality of Kant's view that we do not depend on external sources for moral guidance? Do you think this is the case? Do you agree that a 'basic principle of morality [has] to be one which could actually be used by everyone alike'? Give reasons for your answer. What is 'common-sense morality'? Can there be moral principles 'whose truth everyone can see intuitively and can readily apply'? What are the implications of Bentham's view (as expressed in this passage) that 'if producing the general happiness and producing our own do not always call for the same action... we should change society so that they do'? Autonomy and theory: pro and con (pages 150–52) What does it mean to say that Bentham's theory 'seemed to call for calculations ordinary people could not make'? What is meant by 'ordinary people'? Is this an acceptable turn of phrase? Why did Bentham believe that utilitarianism was a common-sense morality? How did Mill adapt Bentham's principles (as outlined in this passage)? What was the intuitionists' objection to utilitarianism (as outlined in this passage)? Do you agree with these objections? Give reasons for your answer. On what grounds did G. E. Moore argue that 'knowledge of values could not be derived from knowledge of facts'? What are the implications of this view? Where might it lead moral philosophy? From the information provided in this passage how did Hegel develop moral thought?

Do you agree that community values go beyond individual values? What are the implications

Why do you think that thinkers such as Hegel and Marx did not give the central place to individual morality that was given by Kant and Mill? Is this the best way to think of morality in

of this view?

the modern world?

- How do you understand the American pragmatic position as outlined in the first paragraph on page 152?
- What implications are raised by Nietzche's observation that modern morality is rooted in 'the struggle for mastery, and envy and resentment of those who achieved it'? Do you think this is an accurate observation?
- Do you agree that 'moral beliefs are just expressions of feeling'? What are the implications of this view for religion and human experience?
- What do you think is the best way to approach individual moral decision-making: as a matter
 of knowledge, feeling or custom? Are there any reasonable alternative ways of
 understanding it?
- Explain Sartre's understanding of morality as outlined in this passage. Do you agree with it?
 Give reasons for your answer.
- What is the significance of the view that 'the ultimate point of morality [is] increasing human happiness by providing rational methods for resolving disputes'? Do you think this is the best way to understand the purpose of moral philosophy?

New directions (page 153)

- In what way is Rawls' thinking a revitalization of Kant's moral theory?
- Why does Rawls think justice is so important? (You need refer only to this passage.) What are the implications of this view?
- Why do you think that modern moral philosophy has focused so much on 'actual social and political problems'? Are there better examples you could offer than those identified by Schneewind?
- Why do you think that modern moral philosophy has returned to the notion of virtue as of primary importance in moral philosophy?
- How do you understand Schneewind's example of the rural lake retreat? Can you offer a
 different example to illustrate the notion of 'the need to co-ordinate the behaviour of many
 individuals if effective action is to be taken'?
- What are the implications for the development of modern moral philosophy of focusing on these kinds of issues?

Matag

Consolidation exercises

- 1. Write a paragraph explaining the nature and significance of virtue ethics. Make sure you know how you would use it in an essay on any relevant extract from Schneewind's article.
- 2. Write a paragraph on the important features of divine command ethics (the knowledge of the good as derived directly from God) and again make sure you know how you would use it in an essay on any relevant extract from Schneewind's article.
- 3. Write a paragraph on the key characteristics of natural moral law and again make sure you know how you would use it in an essay on any relevant extract from Schneewind's article.
- 4. Write a paragraph on the key characteristics of Kant's deontological approach to ethics, making sure you know how you would use it in an essay on any relevant extract from Schneewind's article.
- 5. Prepare a paragraph on the role of intuition in moral decision-making. Use information from your study of ethical language to help here.
- 6. Prepare a paragraph on the key features of Bentham's utilitarianism and be sure you can apply it appropriately to any relevant extract from Schneewind's article.
- 7. Write a paragraph outlining how logical positivist thought impacts on moral philosophy.
- 8. Identify two or more of the modern social moral problems which Schneewind identifies in the penultimate paragraph and outline why they are so important for moral philosophy today. Make sure that you are sufficiently critical in your approach so that you don't overwhelm a potential essay with too many factual details.
- Prepare a paragraph discussing Schneewind's observation that modern moral philosophy has come to focus on the implications of moral problems which require the behaviour of many individuals if 'effective action is to be taken'.

Notes			

J. Schneewind: 'Modern moral philosophy' – Worksheet

Explain the key points of the following paragraphs.

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	
Introduction	
Toward autonomy	

Autonomy and theory: pro and con New directions		
	Autonomy and theory: pro and con	
New directions		
	New directions	

What is the conclusion that Schneewind reaches? Is it balanced and fair and supported by evidence?

Which aspects of Schneewind's arguments are facts and which are his opinions OR the opinions of others?

Facts	e.g. 'Ancient Western philosophical thought about how to live centred on the question of the highest good'	What evidence supports these facts?	What evidence may be used to counter these facts?

Opinions	e.g. 'The moral law, Kant holds, is not a requirement to do good to others.'	What support may be given to these opinions?	What challenges may be made to these opinions?

What other material from my AS and A2 studies (including all subjects) can Luce in my appear to support and/or appear Schooling's
What other material from my AS and A2 studies (including all subjects) can I use in my answer to support and/ or oppose Schneewind's
interpretation?
Which scholars and quotations can I utilise in my answer that are not directly alluded to in this passage?
Is there anything I can use from the Bible and/or other religious texts?

Vhich claims/observations of Schneewind's do I support, and why?	Which claims/observations of Schneewind's do I challenge, and why?

If Schneewind's observations are right, then what are the implications for the following?:	
(i) Believers and non-believers in God	
(ii) The study of moral philosophy	
(iii) Daily moral decision-making	

Is it possible for Schneewind's interpretation to be wrong? If so, what are the implications for the following?:
(i) Believers and non-believers in God?
(ii) The study of moral philosophy
(iii) Daily moral decision-making

What do you think is the strongest aspect of Schneewind's interpretation? What is the weakest?
Taking everything into account, do you agree or disagree with the conclusions drawn at different stages of Schneewind's article? Give your
reasons.

End-of-unit quick quiz

Try to answer these questions without looking at the passages.

Jamieson

- 1. Clarify the difference between questions *about* moral theory and questions *in* moral theory.
- 2. Explain the 'dominant conception' regarding moral theories
- 3. What are the **implications** of Anscombe's view that the aspects of the dominant conception are 'untenable without the notion of a law giver'?
- 4. How does **Schneewind** explain the implications of this rejection of divine command morality?
- 5. Clarify why it may be claimed that 'there can be no moral authority in pluralistic, liberal societies'. Do you agree? What are the implications of this claim?
- 6. Do you agree that 'women have different patterns of moral response than men'? What are the implications of this view?
- 7. Clarify what Jamieson means by 'role reversal tests' (p136). How does an understanding of Lafollette's argument help here?

- 8. Do you agree that 'moral theorising goes on as part of our ordinary moral practices'?
- 9. Clarify (i) foundationalism and (ii) coherentism.
- 10. Explain the difference between 'imaginary examples' and 'hypothetical examples' in ethics. Which do you find more useful and why?

Lafollette

- 1. Explain the difference between partial and impartial morality.
- 2. Which ethical theories, if any, distinguish between these approaches in their application?
- 3. For what reasons may it be desirable to 'treat all humans (creatures?) alike unless there is some general and morally relevant reason which justifies a difference in treatment'?
- 4. Do you agree that 'universal love is a higher ideal than family loyalty? What are the implications of this view?
- 5. Do you think it is 'wrong and undesirable' to claim that the demands of morality are superior to personal relationships?

- 6. In what way does Rachels reduce personal relationships to a set of obligations? What are the implications of this view?
- 7. Is it necessary to justify saving a loved one from drowning rather than a stranger? In what way is this an example of foundationalism?
- 8. Clarify the ways in which morality and personal relationships may be supportive.
- 9. What evidence may there be that we need to grow up in personal relationships to develop morality?
- 10. Do you agree that 'partiality which regularly disregards strangers while heaping trivial benefits on intimates is not justified'? What examples has Lafollette previously given to support this view? What are the implications of disagreeing with this view?

Schneewind

- 1. What does Schneewind identify as the characteristic approach(es) of ancient Western philosophical thought regarding morality?
- 2. Why do you think that moral philosophers are now primarily interested in 'issues concerning public morality'?
- 3. What are the implications of using natural law as the foundation for morality?

- 4. Why was Pierre Bayle's proposal that atheists could form a decent society shocking? Would it be a shocking claim today? Why/why not?
- 5. Clarify the ideas that virtue requires us to work for the good of others?
- 6. What are the implications of moral behaviour being influenced by the approval/disapproval of others?
- 7. How does Kant's approach to morality related to his moral argument for the existence of God?
- 8. Is utilitarianism common sense morality? Why/why not?
- 9. Where may sceptical doubts about the existence of an eternal universally binding morality lead the moralist's thinking?
- 10. Do you think that it is possible to assess the issues in modern ethics outlined in the penultimate paragraph without using ethical theory?