

ETHICAL DIMENSIONS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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How do we determine the locus of moral authority? What is the foundation of our ethics. Various answers have been put forward. Below are alternative standards that have been suggested for determining what is the highest good.

1. **God ' s will, law, commands, decrees:**

What is written in the Bible or Sacred Scripts, usually dealing with the necessity of obedience, respect, submission, but always entailing some degree of self sacrifice.

2. **Nature ' s or Natural Law:**

There is a " natural order " to things. We can tell what is good by conforming to the rules of nature, including human nature. We use such expressions as ' it ' s always been this way ' or we cannot do other (in the long run) than nature ordains. Violating the natural order is ' doing wrong. '

3. **Custom and tradition** (and ' community standards '):

The right or good things to do have been worked out and endorsed by our forbearers and by experience. Long practice - precedent tells us what is wise and what is good. Look to the past.

4. **Man ' s Law or ' The Law ' :**

A body of rules politically determined by rulers that identify what is prohibited or required of all citizens. Laws are designed for social order, & conflict reduction.

5. **Common Sense or Prudence:**

Sound, cautious judgment about one ' s own interest, including following those practices that have wide-spread acceptance or recognition. This guides one to sage judgments about right and wrong -what will cause harm or unhappiness

6. **Egoism:**

The doctrine that self-interest is the proper goal of all human actions as opposed to altruism. In its popular form - Whatever works for you. Whatever feels good (my happiness).

7. **Ethics (The Ethics Legacy):**

Moral values ethically analyzed. Using various sets of basic principles developed over centuries to analyze moral claims about what contributes to the " good society " and the " good life. " Rational examination of what we ought to do and should not do to meet those ends as well as what the ends should be. A set of guiding principles about ends, means, duties, justice, fairness, rights, respect and obligations to others. These are principles that allow us to make persuasive statements that X is right, or fair, or just, or good for the following reasons.