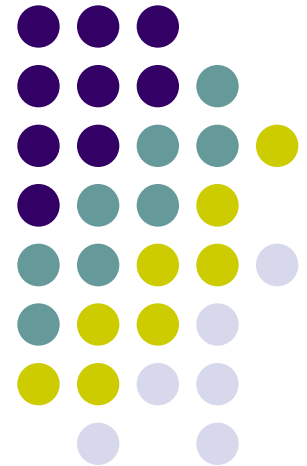
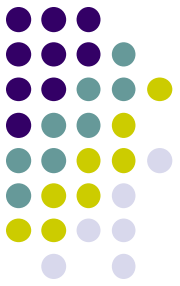


Catholic Moral Teaching & the Frontier Wars in Ethics

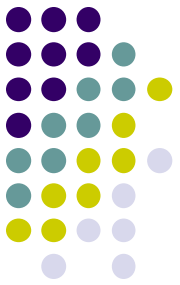
Rev Kevin McGovern,
Caroline Chisholm Centre for Health Ethics:
Multifaith Academy for Chaplaincy & Community Ministries,
14 July 2015



Outline

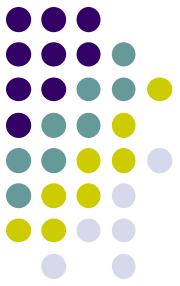


1. Introduction
2. Frontier Wars in Ethics
 - i. Strengths & Limitations of Traditional Ethics
 - ii. The Enlightenment and the New Morality
 - iii. Deficiencies of the New Morality
3. Implications



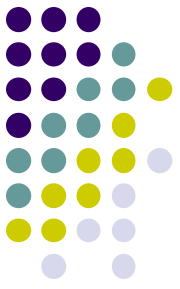
1. Introduction

The **nurse** and the **businessman**

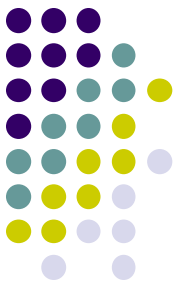


- This **nurse** is an exemplar of **traditional morality**
- This **businessman** is an exemplar of the **‘new’ morality**
- not all businessmen are like this **businessman**
- are all health professionals like this **nurse**?

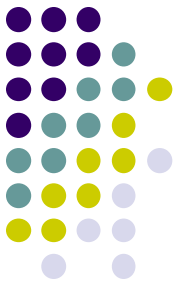
Traditional Morality and the 'New' Morality



- the traditional morality of Western civilisation
- the basis of the ethos of health care
- e.g. Catholic & other faiths, CALD migrants, country towns, and the lives of many, many good people
- Its origin is the Enlightenment (C17 – C18)
- Pseudo-morality or anti-morality

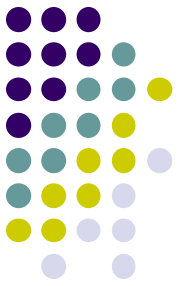


- We are currently caught up in a clash of civilisations or cultures. Will our society choose **traditional morality** or the **‘new’ morality**?
- In this clash, both the culture of health care and the very future of civilisation are at stake. If we get this wrong, we stand at the beginning of a new Dark Ages.

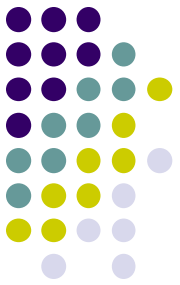


2. Frontier Wars in Ethics
 - i. Strengths & Limitations of Traditional Ethics

Traditional Ethics



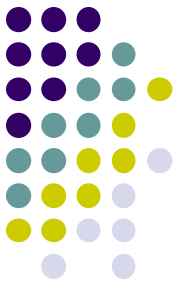
- Responsibility with exceptions
- Based on reason and revelation
- Human dignity based on *imago Dei*
- Teleological
- Doing and Being
- Virtues
- Common Good
- Activist government
- Applied ethics – sex, marriage & family, social justice, bioethics, business ethics & environmental ethics
- Authoritarian
- Slow to change
- Some say, some reappraisal about sex and sexuality



2. Frontier Wars in Ethics

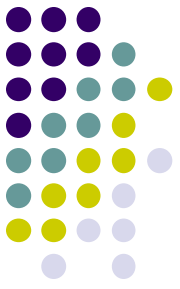
ii. The Enlightenment and the New Morality

The Enlightenment and the New Morality

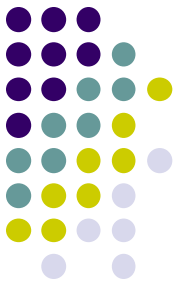


- **David Hume** (1711–1776)
 - sought the basis of morality in the emotions (e.g. “moral sentiment,” “sympathy”)
 - BUT why should we follow these ‘moral’ emotions rather than our ‘immoral’ ones?
- **Immanuel Kant** (1724–1804)
 - sought the basis of ethics in reason and duty (e.g. the Categorical Imperative)
 - BUT why should we follow the Categorical Imperative?
- **Jeremy Bentham** (1748-1832), **John Stuart Mill** (1806-1873)
 - sought the basis of morality in consequences (“utilitarianism”)
 - BUT incommensurability of goods

The Enlightenment and the New Morality (cont'd)



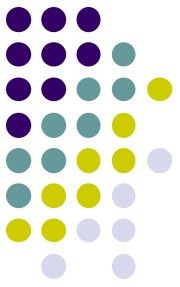
- **Frederick Nietzsche** (1844-1900)
 - efforts so far had presupposed traditional moral content.
 - Nietzsche rejected traditional moral content!
- **Immanuel Kant** (1724–1804)
 - moral values do not come from outside – either from God or from nature
 - instead, “each man his own moralist”
 - pure autonomy became the only basis and the only content of ethics
 - “moral relativism”



2. Frontier Wars in Ethics

iii. Deficiencies of the New Morality

Deficiencies of the New Morality



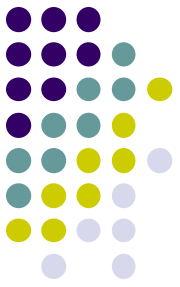
Traditional Morality

- Responsibility with exceptions
- Based on reason and revelation
- Human dignity based on *imago Dei*
- Teleological
- Doing and Being
- Virtues

The New Morality

- Autonomy with exceptions
- Basis is unclear
- Human dignity based on actual capacity for reason
- Not teleological
- Little emphasis on Being or the Virtues

Deficiencies of the New Morality (cont'd)

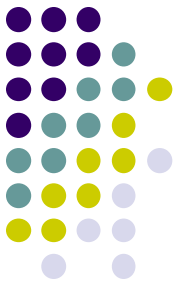


Traditional Morality

- **Common Good**
- **Activist Government**
- **Applied ethics – sex, marriage & family, social justice, bioethics, business ethics & environmental ethics**

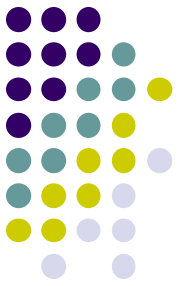
The New Morality

- **Individualistic, with little sense of the common good**
- **Limited Government**
- **Applied ethics – sex, marriage & family, social justice, bioethics, business ethics & environmental ethics**

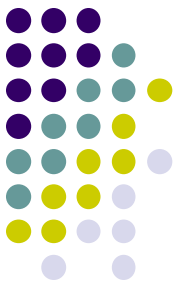


3. Implications

Implications



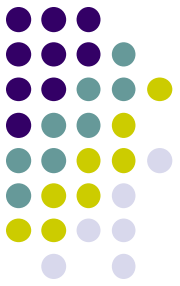
- 1) Feel proud of traditional morality
- 2) Work for appropriate reappraisals within traditional morality
- 3) Multiculturalism
- 4) Conscientious objection
- 5) Promote the common good
- 6) Promote the virtues



An article on this:

- Kevin McGovern, “Catholic ethics is different,” *Health Matters* 72 (Summer 2014-15): 26-28. Available online at Caroline Chisholm Centre for Health Ethics, http://chisholmhealthethics.org.au/system/files/catholic_ethics_is_different_1.pdf

Presenter



Rev Kevin McGovern

Caroline Chisholm Centre for Health Ethics

Suite 47, 141 Grey Street

East Melbourne VIC 3002

T: (03) 9928-6681

E: kevin.mcgovern@svha.org.au

These PowerPoint slides will be on the Chisholm Centre's website at <http://chisholmhealthethics.org.au/presentations>



Caroline Chisholm
Centre for Health Ethics