ETHICAL THEORY

The Distribution of the Good

As you read the material for our next class, keep the questions below in mind. To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages. Keep in mind that there are two basic kinds of information that you need to look for in the reading:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?

2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, *it is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible conclusion about an issue, rather than another.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.

Reading

•   Shelly Kagan, *Normative Ethics*, "The Total View", "Equality" & "Consequentialism".

Questions

1. What is the total view and what the rationale justifying it?

2. Throughout this reading, two different notions of equality emerge. What are they, and how do they differ? If you are committed to one of these forms of equality, must you necessarily be committed to the other? How are these connected to or different from welfarism?

3. What is consequentialism and what are its main components? How is it connected to utilitarianism?