

## Chapter 7. GR Logic

## Chapter 8. GR Applications

## Chapter 9. GR Frameworks

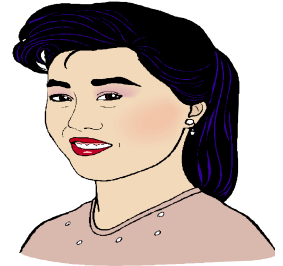
- GR justifications
- GR rights and virtues
- Religion
- Evolution
- Natural law
- Hobbes

# Why accept GR and the other consistency norms?



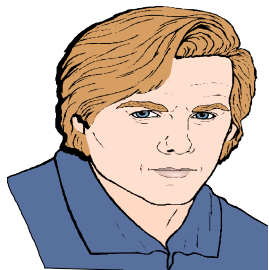
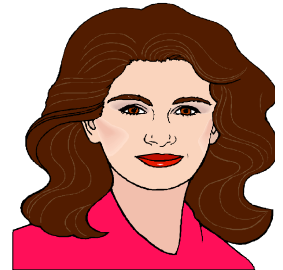
Objective self-evident truths

Self-interest



Cultural conventions

God's will



Rational and altruistic feelings

Built into our moral language



# GR rights and virtues

A *right* is what can be justifiably demanded of others.

The most basic right is the GR right to **equal moral consideration**: “*Everyone has the right to be treated by others only as these others are willing to have themselves treated in the same circumstances.*”



A *virtue* is a **good habit**. While we phrased GR as an imperative or ought, there's also the virtue of *consideration for others* – and virtues about impartiality, conscientiousness, practical wisdom, and so on. Our motivation could be *extrinsic* (and lower) or *intrinsic* (and higher).

# GR in Christianity

“So always treat others as you want to be treated, for this sums up the Law and the prophets” (Matthew 7:12) and “Do to others as you would have them do to you” (Luke 6:31).



Many Christian thinkers over the ages have seen GR as somehow central to the moral law that is “written on the human heart” (Romans 2:15).

# GR in non-Christian faiths


## *Abrahamic*


Judaism ✡  
Christianity †  
Islam ☾  
Bahá'í ✨


## *Non-Abrahamic*


Hinduism ॐ  
Buddhism ☸  
Confucianism 木  
Taoism ☯


And other faiths.... The second parliament of the world's religions. Paul McKenna's poster. And atheists too.


 **Baha'i Faith:** Lay not on any soul a load that you would not wish to be laid upon you, and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself. (Baha'u'lláh, Gleanings)


 **Islam:** Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself. (The Prophet Muhammad, Hadith)


 **Judaism:** What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. This is the whole Torah; all the rest is commentary. (Hillel, Talmud, Shabbat 31a)


 **Jainism:** One should treat all creatures in the world as one would like to be treated. (Mahavira, Sutrakritanga)


 **Zoroastrianism:** Do not do unto others whatever is injurious to yourself. (Shayast-na-Shayast 13.29)


 **Hinduism:** This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you. (Mahabharata 5:1517)


 **Buddhism:** Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful. (Udana-Varga 5.18)


 **Confucianism:** One word which sums up the basis of all good conduct... loving kindness. Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself. (Confucius, Analects 15.23)

 **Taoism:** Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain, and your neighbor's loss as your own loss. (T'ai Shang Kan Ying P'ien, 213-218)

 **Sikhism:** I am a stranger to no one; and no one is a stranger to me. Indeed, I am a friend to all. (Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1299)

 **Native Spirituality:** We are as much alive as we keep the earth alive. (Chief Dan George)

 **Unitarianism:** We affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. (Unitarian principle)

 **Christianity:** In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets. (Jesus, Matthew 7:12)



# A composite GR message

Treat others as you want to be treated; what you want done (or not done) to yourself, do (or don't do) to another.

Love your neighbors; regard the joy or pain of another as your own. Desire for others what you desire for yourself; let your heart be pure and your judgments fair.

Understand the feelings of others as you understand your own; the heart of another mirrors your own heart.

Love your enemies; if a foolish person does you wrong, respond with love.

Show peace or violence toward others, and they'll likely act that way toward you; the treatment you give is the treatment you'll get.

Fill your life with kindnesses, and you'll have joy; compassion brings contentment and inner peace.

Live as sons and daughters of one God; the world is one big family.

# GR and evolution



Charles Darwin  
1809-1882

Humans evolved to be *social animals*  
(*with social instincts*) who can reason;  
both promote our survival.

Our GR-based morality came  
from this combination.

Issues: Social Darwinism, evolutionary selection  
(individual or group or gene), neurological GR  
mechanisms (Donald Pfaff), babies (Paul Bloom).





Biological instincts promote concern for just your group (a lower morality). Cultural evolution moves us toward universal concern for everyone (a higher morality).

- Every major religion teaches a universal GR.
- Over time, groups mix and group identity becomes fuzzier, hurting groupism.
- War between groups hurts everyone; so group-interest moves us to promote a universal GR.
- Groupism is riddled with inconsistencies, and so consistency pushes us toward a universal GR.

# GR and natural law

**Natural law** is the objective moral norms that are *written on the human heart*. These are based on instinct and reason, and known by nearly everyone. GR sums up morality.



St. Thomas Aquinas  
1224-74

Human laws are invented by human reason to apply natural law to particular circumstances.

Morality is part of God's plan to lead us to himself. God gave us the ability to know the good and to choose freely. Our duties depend on reason + our created biological nature.

On Gensler natural law, our duties depend on our God-given nature – as *rational, biological, and spiritual*.

- (1) As *rational beings*, we ought, as far as practically possible in our decision making, to be vividly aware of the relevant facts and be consistent.

The GR-consistency view explains how this moral rationality works; and evolution explains how it came to be written on the human heart.

(2) As *biological beings*, we have further duties. These apply moral rationality to our *human nature*.



Squirrel Boucher

Compared with squirrels, humans are poorly adapted to nature. Our survival depends on reason: being intelligent and cooperative (GR).

Human nature requires four key goods: possessions, speech, family, and life. So four key norms are recognized across the globe: against stealing, lying, adultery, and killing.

(3) As *spiritual beings* called to eternal life with God, we ought to love God with our entire being.

- Loving God includes *obeying* God (who is supremely wise and loving), and this covers all our other duties as well. Wrongdoing is a personal affront to God.
- Religion gives a context (or worldview) for morality. So GR is part of God's plan for us to grow in personhood toward our eternal fulfillment in him.
- For believers, morality is part of loving God. That's the biggest difference that theism makes to morality.

# GR and Hobbes

Hobbes defended GR from a different understanding of human nature. He saw humans as entirely egoistic; self-interest does and ought to govern us completely. We have no seeds of morality or altruism inside of us.



Thomas Hobbes  
1588-1679

Even so, enlightened self-interest moves us to create a *social contract* based on GR. A *state of nature* without rules would be so miserable that we'd agree to set up and enforce social rules with a GR pattern (e.g., as we want others to respect OUR property, so also we should respect THEIR property).