
Political Philosophy: Use of Philosophy Outside of the Academy

The first task we are required to make is to give a definition of what philosophy is, if not, the term can be used broadly and can contain any number of subjects therefore the definition of philosophy I will use is “the critical study of the basic principles and concepts of a particular branch of knowledge, especially with a view to improving or reconstituting them” (<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/philosophy>). Secondly, the question at hand is, does philosophy have a use outside of the academy? I will answer by looking at philosophy’s applicability within the current working environment placing forward its use within the political system and business world to its newly found importance in the coding industry and medical field. With these, I will provide examples as well as scholars both past and present. Finally, before concluding I will look at the wider importance of philosophy to the individual and their everyday life. Voltaire is quoted as saying “ The discovery of what is true and the practice of that which is good are the two most important aims of philosophy” (<https://www.azquotes.com/quote/360837>) and this has a universal truth in any working industry, for instance, if you’re a steam turbine engineer then you aim to discover how to create a steam turbine and then wish to discover how to make it efficient, environmentally friendly and profitable, you find what is true and then you find what is good therefore you are acting similar in nature to that of a philosopher. Philosophy is not simply about the larger question of what happens after death? or why are we here? it can also be about everyday problems as why I work where I do? or how do I use my money? coming down to the basic activities we do on a day-to-day basis.

The most potent area of philosophy is that of the political system to such a point that there is a branch of philosophy called political philosophy. One of the most influential philosophers to the political landscape of recent centuries was Niccolò Machiavelli and his book the prince which though it may be argued was a satire has had dire consequences, many leaders of recent times have taken quotes such as “it is better to be feared than loved if you cannot be both” (<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/8b/84/f8/8b84f876fdb49ca519aa077ecbf4767a.jpg>) to extreme levels such a prolific example is Joseph Stalin following the three main principles display false character, crush opponents and ends justify the means as you can see the political influence of Machiavelli has been that of despair. A more modern example of the political philosophy influence is Hardt “But thinking of politics now as a project of social transformation on a large scale. I’m not at all convinced that political activity can come from the university” (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Hardt) therefore by similar logic political philosophy is more beneficial outside the university for practical learning and thereby this branch of philosophy is used outside of the academy.

Another area of which the application of philosophy is present is within the medical field. The ethical decision methods of utilitarianism (especially John Stuart Mill’s rule utilitarianism) can be used in medical issues deciding which of two options is the better choice, utilitarianism’s principle of utility greatest good for the greatest number allows quick decisions to be made under stress such as the decisions emergency divisions will be required to make. Utilitarianism also can act to justify actions within dire situations such as Philippa foot trolley problem or a more realistic and medical example the life of the mother vs the life of the foetus when both are

at risk or perhaps it can either be used in the matter of euthanasia. A crucial book for medical students is the principle of biomedical ethics by Tom Beauchamp (http://ukcen.net/ethical_issues/ethical_frameworks/the_four_principles_of_biomedical_ethics) which outline the four principles of biomedical ethics which are respect for autonomy, non-maleficence, justice and beneficence these make sure a level of standard is maintained within the hospitals though the initial theory is learnt in an academic environment the application of which is the vital part, you may learn the theory like the back of your hand however unless you can apply it within the working environment you are not suited to the care job role. Another issue and cruciality of philosophy is place forward by Davidson stating that doctors require both science and ethics for their actions, an example he puts forward is whether pain that is forgotten is better than that in the future depending on your answer is placing either anaesthesia ahead of amnesia or vice versa (<https://jme.bmj.com/content/40/10/649>). The use of philosophy in the medical field is not held to philosophers rather the medical professional already in such a field, therefore, they do not require to take further studies in philosophy academy rather they apply theories simply to their work showing that someone does not require learning philosophy in an academy to think and act in a philosophical manner.

The world of business and philosophy seem to be on the opposite ends of a spectrum however they're connecting factors such as those within business ethics. Business ethics by definition is "the study of appropriate business policies and practices regarding potentially controversial subjects including bribery and corporate social responsibility" (<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/business-ethics.asp>) Such an example of a vital business and legal question is what should be for sale? some philosophers i.e. Satz believe that such things as sex and organs should not be for sale while others such as Jaworski disagree this would have a direct consequence on our lives as for instance the purchase of organs would create a market and will discriminate against the poorer people's right to life. Another question business ethics can help to answer is to what extent are companies liable for the harm that comes due to the use or misuse of their products? With the responsibility often argued falling up the companies, Manuel Velasquez argues manufacturers should disclose all risks if not this can have financial legal consequences for the companies. There also the issue of corporate social responsibility and with the current environmental political situation this could have an immediate effect in an attempt for organisation to combat climate change with the support of such ideas as Carrol's pyramid of corporate social responsibility and the opposition of Friedman "The social responsibility of business is to increase it's profits" (<https://phdessay.com/milton-friedman-the-social-responsibility-of-business-is-to-increase-profits/>) in this example it is of vital importance that the organisations change their view of corporate social responsibilities to help environmental factors and thereby business ethics are going to have a crucial role to play in changing this view yet changing a organisations view is not going to be from an academy it will require actions and direct communication.

Philosophy also has applications in other industries as Hawley's states metaphysics can apply to computer science, biology, psychiatry and medicine an example of this is the coding of new technological inventions such as the driverless car which will require an ethical system in case of an issue similar to the trolley problem say there it must either run over 2 kids or a woman on a path which should the technology choose well with the help of philosophy the coder can place a system for instance of utilitarianism which would choose to run over the woman and could justify the action by the principle of utility. One of the best descriptions of why philosophy will be so vital to coding is given by Guarino and Musen who state " linguists and philosophers now work hand in hand with traditional computer scientists to build complex information systems with

explicit, examinable conceptual models of the environments in which they are intended to operate and knowledge that they will process” (<https://philosophy.stackexchange.com/questions/32914/what-are-some-real-life-applications-of-metaphysics>) computers will have to be coded to deal with the current state of the world and any future states, therefore, they must be placed with initial and growing knowledge of life and it all intel’s for their set purpose for instance if it’s a care robot it must be built-in with the concept of caring as well as such theories as the principle of biomedical ethics. Though such technology is currently the theories and learning of how we will use them and how they will be in the future cannot be taught in academies because of the unpredictable nature of future technology therefore the philosophy will have to be used outside of the academy when said technology arises.

edubirdie.com