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Kohlberg Stages of Moral Development Notes Sheet

Define Moral Development –

**The morality of Robin Hood: Leah Staple**

I told my mom when I was 5 I was going to marry Robin Hood. I of course meant the fox from the Disney version. He was charming and I had a thing for red that I still haven't quite kicked. As I got older I saw the movie again and saw other adaptations of the story, notably Mel Brooks' and that other one in black and white. Now, in all versions of Robin Hood, he is the hero. The audience is with him every step of the way and against the tyrannical Prince (notably played by Richard Lewis and a weenie-looking lion) But I wonder now as I'm older if in all instances-or even in any-if Robin Hood was right.

Steal from the rich give to the poor. Can it be that simple? Only in a fairy tale. The Prince was a jerk and was already stealing from the poor. He deserved to be swindled by a fox and a fat bear out of his excess stores of gold. If it were that simple there would be a whole underbelly of Robin Hoods stealing from the Trumps that rule the land. But that doesn't happen. Would we want it to? Even if the rich and the Donald Trumps are all grossly evil, would we want them to be robbed?

I think Robin Hood demonstrates an ethical boundary. In writing this I'm fully cognizant of the fact that I would gladly accept handouts that I know came from the robbery of a rich and shady businessman. But the boundary is I would never do the robbery. I would never be able to hold that ethical stance whereby I could be Robin Hood. Stealing is never right. Freshman year of college I lived with a girl who received a $2000 byweekly allowance. Almost all of it went to clothes that she wore maybe once and then let rot in her dresser. Around halfway through the year my other roommate began stealing articles of clothing from the girl and wearing them openly. The girl never noticed even when her own clothes were worn blatantly in front of her. Eventually I ended up with a few pieces of clothes that the second girl didn't want. Had the rich girl in the situation been at all a good person I might have felt a tinge of guilt or maybe would have refused, but she wasn't, and I still we
ar the clothes.

Still though, I was in the wrong. And ultimately Robin Hood was in the wrong. Stealing property that doesn't belong to us no matter what our intentions, to give to the poor or the not, means we are circumventing the laws and taking meaning away from their enforcement. If there was a world full of Robin Hoods then the market would most definitely crumble and the infrastructure protecting all of our capital would go with it.

What would the world look like if all of our ethical codes landed just barely on the other side of that line, on the same point where Robin Hood smiles mischievously with a fox-like grin?

* Response: I think about this quandary often. The scenario for all intents and purposes may be simplified as follows: the worlds distribution of wealth and influence is dangerously unfair. Most people are poor. A few are rich. The few are often insensitive to the plight of the poor and unwilling to share.Enter Charles or Leah or whoever; he's poor but sincere about his intention to serve the poor. He cannot accrue enough wealth in his lifetime to make any meaningful impact. His options are accept the status quo, live and accept a life which is less that his deepest convictions or bring balance by 'shifting wealth' - playing Robin Hood. The ethical dilemma is 'who made his view of the world the one by which 'the good' should be measured by?'. I often consider what a wealthy friend of mine once said, that the rich are always thought of as wicked or foolish by the poor - in both cases because they refuse to redistribute their personal achievements according to the dictates of men who would rather preach than labor.
Perhaps your roommate -wealthy girl would have gladly shared her excess if you had asked but I can only speculate as to that possibility. I have found through personal experience that I have often crafted painfully convoluted means of obtaining what I have later learned could have been had for the asking. I fancied Robin Hood growing up myself, I was always drawn to the weak, not that I was strong myself, I'm rather diminutive in size but I found very early in life how to defend myself, 3 sisters had taught me that the tongue was indeed sharper than the sword!

Summarize Kohlberg’s Theory –

Pre-Conventional Moral Development

Stage 1 - Title:

Age:

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Stage 2 – Title

Age –

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Conventional Moral Development

Stage 3 – Title

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Stage 4 – Title

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Post-Conventional Moral Development

Stage 5 – Title

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Stage 6 – Title

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The Heinz Dilemma:

What would you do?

Does moral reasoning necessarily lead to moral behavior?

Is Justice the only aspect of moral reasoning we should consider?