# Key Topics in Applied Ethics

## Bio-medical Ethics

**What is a person?**
- Do all humans share the same moral status?
- Fetus? Comatose or vegetative?
- How do we evaluate the worth of a life?
- Worthwhile/Valuable life (Utilitarian)
- Autonomous life (Deontological)
- Flourishing life (Virtue)

**Duties and Rights**
- Does everyone have a right to life?
- Kantian and Utilitarian definitions: ends and means
- What about when rights conflict?

**Acts and Omissions**
- Letting die or acting to kill?
- Virtue approach: doctors’ responsibility

**Triage**
- How to we evaluate needs?
- Utilitarian calculus?
- Is there another way?

## Distribution of Wealth

**What is the problem?**
- Extreme poverty, disease, lack of dignity
- Question of justice - needs definition
- Is NOT acting a moral failure?

**Extent of Care**
- Charity begins at home
- Charity as supererogatory act
- How far does our concern go?
- How to resolve conflicts of interest?

**Normative responses**
- Utilitarian: Singer’s puddle, cost/benefit analysis of charity
- Kant: Duty of care, people as ends
- Virtue: Compassion, generosity, part of a human community

**Distribution of Resources**
- Equality? Is that justice?
- According to need? Utilitarian values
- According to desserts? What right do we have to earn/inherit?

## The Environment

**Do natural objects have a moral status?**
- Are humans our only moral concern?
- Is it enough to protect the environment only for human ends?
- Are animals worthy of moral concern?
- Are humans worth more than animals? animals than plants? plants than rocks?
- The ‘last man’ argument.

**Instrumental and intrinsic value**
- Does the environment have intrinsic value?
- Should we be emotionally attached to non-humans?
- Does it matter if a species becomes extinct? Why?

**Conflict of values**
- Utilitarian cost/benefit analysis
- Do we have a duty to animals or nature?
- Virtues: wonder, responsibility
- Human-centred v. Life-centred