

*Climate Ethics: Critical Analysis 1*

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**Ethical Theories and Practices**

1. Harm principle: moral obligation not to do anything that can cause harm to others. This particular principle relates to the sixth stage of the Sinclair/ Kohlberg paradigm as it looks at being a universally ethical individual who is caring and does not cause direct harm to the public.
2. Indirect harm principle: moral obligation not to allow another individual to do anything that can cause harm to others. This principle also relates to the sixth stage in that we are working to prevent indirect harm to the public.
3. Contribution principle: moral obligations not to further complicate or worsen problems. I am not exactly sure what stage this principle relates to as the main goal here is to simply avoid complicating an already existing issue.
4. Gas principle: moral obligations not to allow harmful gases into the atmosphere. This principle absolutely relates to the sixth stage of the paradigm as individuals have the responsibility to prevent harmful toxins from poisoning the lives of the public.
5. Risk principle: moral obligation not to increase risks of harm. This principle also relates to the sixth stage as not increasing risks of harm is the ethically correct thing to do.
6. Universalizability principle: moral obligations not to act on beliefs that are not a universal law. This principle surrounding universal law relates to the fifth stage in that we are expected to treat others as we would like to be treated all while abiding by legalistic contractual agreements.
7. Means principle: moral obligations not to treat individuals as a means. This directly relates to the sixth stage as well as we look at treating individuals in a moral, caring, and consistent

manner.

8. Doctrine of double effect: moral obligation not to cause intentional harm. This doctrine is also prevalent in the sixth stage of ethical decision-making as we are trying to avoid causing harm.
9. Virtue principle: moral obligation not to perform a contrary act to virtue. This principle look at the sixth stage being the universal-ethical principle orientation of not contradicting any virtuous acts and treating humans as individuals.
10. Ideal law principle: moral obligation not to perform illegal acts. This particular principle looks at the fifth stage of the Sinclair/ Kohlberg paradigm as it relates to being legally responsible. Here controls and agreements are regarded at the government level.
11. Group principle: moral obligation not to perform harmful acts as part of a group.
12. General action principle: moral obligation not to perform an act where if others performed similar acts, it would be considered worse.
13. Public permission principle: moral obligation not to perform an act that leads others to believe similar acts are permitted. This principle relates to the fourth Sinclair/ Kohlberg stage as social order is at the center of it. It involves controlling actions as to prevent other individual from believing those actions are acceptable.
14. Contractualist principle: moral obligations not to act against a public rule. This principle relates to both the third and fourth stages of moral reasoning. In the third stage we look at thorough considerations of other individuals, whereas in the fourth stage we look at the concern for order in society.

15. Utilitarianism: actions are considered right if they benefit the majority. This type of view is strongly related to the fourth stage of Sinclair/ Kohlberg's paradigm as it involves benefit the majority of the group involved. It does involve a fair amount of compromise for those individuals that are not a part of the majority, but everyone else is satisfied.

### **Book Relevance**

The book that I was assigned for the purpose of this assignment is titled *Climate Ethics: Essential Readings*. I could not really relate to a lot of the examples and content provided by the text because it was very specific to climate ethics, environment, emissions, economics, and greenhouse gases. I work as a program planner and coordinator for a primary care network in Calgary so I do not have much experience or knowledge on these specific examples, but I did however find the principles very relatable to my role and can see the significance of those principles in other public health professions. I would absolutely recommend the book to an Environmental Health Officer or other type of environmental public health professional. I find that the content is quite specific to environmental factors as opposed to issues of public health. This book addresses several principles, such as the ones I have listed previously, that direct related to the Sinclair/ Kohlberg paradigm. Most of the principles I have outlined relate to the stages of moral reasoning in one way or the other as they involve various types of moral obligations. In my personal and professional experiences, there are a number of principles that I have applied. Some of these include of the both harm principles (direct and indirect), contribution, risk, ideal law, and virtue principles to name a few. One of the specific principles that I have absolutely no experience with is the gas principle as I believe this principle is related to environmental health positions alone.

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My environmental background is quite limited and thus I found the readability of this book to be quite dry as I did not find majority of the content to be relatable to me in my current role and profession. The descriptions of the principles I have outlined were clearly defined, but the examples provide were specific to climate and environmental issues which is something I could not relate to, and in most cases could not understand. I believe that this book could be useful for environmental health professionals or local environmental leaders as it speaks in detail about greenhouse gases, climate ethics and economics relating to it, and emission gases. Since this book does talk about climate economics, I believe it could also be useful for environmental financial professionals.