

# Contemporary Moral Problems Book Review

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## ITETHIC

### Book Review 1

Book:

Contemporary Moral Problems by James E. White

Chapter:

James Rachels – Egoism and Moral Scepticism

Library Reference:

Amazon Link:

[http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=pd\\_sim\\_b\\_2/185-6566170-6503008](http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=pd_sim_b_2/185-6566170-6503008)

Quote:

What reason is there for him to continue being moral when it is clearly not to his own advantage to do so?

Learning Expectation:

In this chapter, I expect to learn about:

Psychological egoism

Ethical Egoism

Genuine Egoist

Morality

Why Rachels think that Genuine Egoists are rare?

Review:

This chapter talks about how Rachels defined Psychological egoism and ethical egoism. For him, psychological egoism holds that all human action are self-interested which for me is partly true and false since even though we don't think as if we are not doing it for self-interest, still we are thinking about ourselves first before we think about others. We always think about how we could be benefited with such actions. But sometimes even though we think about ourselves, once love pass through, we now start thinking about others. While ethical egoism says that all action ought to be self-interested.

According to Rachels, genuine egoists are rare. For me, it's true because even though an egoist thinks about himself/herself; there will still come a time that he will think about others. One example of it is in the family, once a family member is in trouble, you will still help them.

Lessons Learned:

- Even though I think about myself often, when it comes to love, my ego will be wipe away
- Ethical egoism
- Psychological egoism

- Genuine Egoists are rare.
- Morality

Integrative Questions:

1. What is Ethical Egoism?
2. What is Psychological egoism?
3. What is genuine egoist?
4. Is there a genuine egoist?
5. What is morality?

1. Explain the legend of Gyges. What questions about morality are raised by the story?

According to the legend, Gyges of Lydia was a shepherd in the service of King Candaules of Lydia. After an earthquake, a cave was revealed in a mountainside where Gyges was feeding his flock. Entering the cave, Gyges discovered that it was in fact the tomb of an enthroned corpse who wore a golden ring, which Gyges pocketed.

Gyges then returned to his fellow shepherds, and began fumbling with the ring that he now wore. Gyges discovered that when he turned the collet of the ring to the inside of his hand, he became invisible to the other shepherds, and they began to marvel as if he had vanished. He turned the ring the other way, and he reappeared; after several trials, he determined that the ring was indeed magical, and gave him the power to turn invisible at will.

Gyges then arranged to be chosen one of the messengers who reported to the king as to the status of the flocks. Arriving at the palace, Gyges used his new power of invisibility to seduce the queen, and with her help he murdered the king, and became king of Lydia himself. King Croesus, famous for his wealth, was Gyges' descendant.

Source: [http://www.experiencefestival.com/a/Ring\\_of\\_Gyges\\_-\\_The\\_legend/id/4712192](http://www.experiencefestival.com/a/Ring_of_Gyges_-_The_legend/id/4712192)

2. Distinguish between psychological and ethical egoism.

Psychological egoism is doing things unselfishly while ethical egoism is doing things that would benefit us.

3. Rachels discusses two arguments for psychological egoism. What are these arguments, and how does he reply to them?

Rachels discusses the argument false and confused because it fails to know whether it's unselfish or self-intent.

4. What three common place confusion does Rachels detect in this thesis of psychological egoism?

confusion of selfishness with self interest, confusion of the assumption that every action is done either from self-interest or from other-regarding motives, And common but false assumption that a concern for one's own welfare is incompatible with any genuine concern for the welfare of others.

5. State the argument for saying that ethical egoism is inconsistent. Why does Rachels accept the argument?

Ethical egoism is inconsistent because it cannot be a rule for all. People can be of self-interest or can be a man for others.

6. According to Rachels, why shouldn't we hurt others, and why should we help others? How can the egoist reply?

Helping others means giving others another chance to prove himself/herself. An egoist would not love that because they only think of themselves.

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Has Rachels answered the question raised by Glaucon, namely, "Why be moral?" If so, what exactly is his answer?

Yes he answered it. And his answer is yes. He is being so moral.

2. Are genuine egoist rare, as Rachels claims? Is it a fact that most people care about others even people they don't know?

For me, yes. Even though most of the time an egoist thinks about him or herself, there would be an instance where in he will think about others and one example of it is in the family.

3. Suppose we define ethical altruism as the view that one should always act for the benefit of others and never in one's own self-interest. Is such a view immoral or not?

It will become moral. Being ethical is being moral in a sense.

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## ITETHIC

### Book Review 2

Book:

Contemporary Moral Problems by James E. White

Chapter:

John Arthur – Religion, Morality, and Conscience

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Quote:

What if I get caught? What if somebody sees me? What will he or she think? How will I feel afterwards? Will I regret it?

Learning Expectation:

In this chapter, I expect to learn about:

- The connection of religion, morality and conscience
- Why religions sometimes become the center of morality for some people?
- Conscience and how it affects my life.
- Is religion really important?
- Why some people think that religion is the one who saves?

Review:

This chapter talks about the connection between religion, morality and conscience. I'm a Christian. Is Christian a religion? I don't think so. In our church, religion is not the one who will save you but the relationship with God. "Jesus is the only way, truth and life. No one can come to the father except by him." (John 14:6) If I talk about religion here, the space is not enough since I don't really believe that religion is important. Morality somehow people misunderstood. Others say that to be a man of moral, you should have a religion and the teachings of religion are morality itself. But that's definitely wrong. Some religions teach their followers to kill for the glory of their god. Some should eat humans because it states in their holy book.

## Lessons Learned:

### I learned that:

- Morality is not religion and vice versa.
- Jesus is the only way.
- Conscience makes me think about morality.

### Integrative Questions:

1. What is religion?
2. What is morality?
3. What is conscience?
4. What is salvation?
5. How can I be saved?

1. According to Arthur, how are morality and religion different?

Morality as per Arthur said is the righteousness or evilness of one's act while religion is one's beliefs in god or person with powers.

2. Why isn't religion necessary for moral motivation?

Religion is just what they believe in. It's not necessarily means that all the teachings of the religions are right. Sometimes, these teachings are immoral. For instance, Islam said that if you kill for the glory of Allah, you'll have riches once you go to the next life which for me is not right. Everybody should live according to what they believe in.

3. Why isn't religion necessary as a source of moral knowledge?

Religion as per moral knowledge is concern is not really the base of morality. To become moral doesn't mean that you need a religion. Sometimes, what you believe in is right but not right in the religion.

4. What is the divine command theory? Why does Arthur reject this theory?

The divine right theory states that, religion is necessary for morality because without God there could be no right and wrong. Arthur rejected this theory because God dictates what is right and what is wrong. Arthur didn't believe this.

5. According to Arthur, how are morality and religion connected?

Arthur states that morality and religion are independent from each other. They you cannot say that you need to have a religion to me morally inclined.

6. Dewey says that morality is social. What does this mean, according to Arthur?

we possess a socially required language within which we think about our choices and which alternatives we ought to follow.

Discussion Questions:

1. Has Arthur refuted the divine command theory? If not, how can it be defended?

He didn't. He just explained.

2. If morality is social, as Dewey says, then how can we have any obligations to nonhuman animals?

Nonhuman animals still have lives. We just have to protect them, care for them and help them to produce more.

3. What does Dewey mean by moral education? Does a college ethics class count as moral education?

Moral is not just can be taught but must be taught.

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### Book Review 3

Book:

Contemporary Moral Problems by James E. White

Chapter:

Friedrich Nietzsche – Master and Slave Morality

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Quote:

Every elevation of the type “main”, has hitherto been the work of an aristocratic society and so will it always be a society believing in a long scale of gradations of rank and differences of worth among human beings, and requiring slavery in some form or other.

Learning Expectation:

In this chapter, I expect to learn about:

- The Master and slave morality
- Why slaves become slaves in the first place?
- Why some masters abuse their powers to their slaves?

Review:

This chapter talks about the concept of Master and slave morality. Before, I'm not aware about this master and slave morality. I live in a family where there are maids to be there when I need them. They are there to cook food for me, to wash my clothes, to clean my room, etc. I don't think that they are slaves but that's what they do, to serve their boss. As I read some of the parts of this chapter, I've realized that before, If you are the master, you have all the rights for your slave and if you are the slave, you have to serve your master for the rest of your life.

Nietzsche argues that a healthy society should allow superior individuals to exercise their “will to power,” their drive toward domination and exploitation of the inferior. I believe that superior should exercise their power but in a positive way that could inferior people would love it. In this country, most of the people are inferior and only a 100 people are superior. Those superiors were the only people who earn more while those inferiors are getting poorer.

Lessons Learned:

In this chapter, I learned:

- Those superiors only enrich themselves while inferiors were the people who suffer poverty.

- Master and slave morality is still happening today.
- The power can only achieve by few people.

Integrative questions:

- What is a master?
- What is a slave?
- What is master and slave morality?
- Who are those superiors?
- Why there are inferiors?

Review Questions:

1. How does Nietzsche characterize a good and healthy society?  
-By having superior people leading and less powerful people following.
2. What is Nietzsche's view of injury, violence, and exploitation?  
Avoidable if we will put our sympathy to others.
3. Distinguish between master-morality and slave-morality.  
Master-morality deals with superiority while slave-morality deals with failing
4. Explain the Will to Power.  
One's determination to be on top and to be superior among others

Discussion Questions:

1. Some people view Nietzsche's writings as harmful and even dangerous. For example, some have charged Nietzsche with inspiring Nazism. Are these charges justified or not? Why or why not?  
  
These charges were already justified because Nietzsche is a person who badly wants to have power as we've seen in his writings.
2. What does it mean to be "a creator of value"?  
  
Creator of value means he or she wants to create his or her value and believe that it is right.

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### Book Review 4

Book:

Contemporary Moral Problems by James E. White

Chapter:

Mary Midgley – Trying Out One’s New Sword

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Quote:

My own impression is that we believe that outsiders can, in principle, deliver perfectly good indictments only, it usually takes more than two weeks to make them damning.

Learning Expectation:

In this chapter, I expect to learn about:

- Mary Midgley’s philosophy about this one’s new sword
- I’m curious about the title since it’s not like the others which directly present the main idea of the chapter.
- I want to know what Mary Midgley was thinking when she did this chapter.

Review:

Trying Out one’s New Sword. I don’t really know the true meaning of this phrase. When I first heard of it, the first thing that came up on my mind is being someone that you’re not and trying to be a person that you’re not used to be. It’s like being a “plastic” to you self.

Moral isolationism as Mary Midgley describes it is when one person only knows his or her culture and doesn’t think about the other cultures around him or her. He only lives in one culture and not looks to another. My professor in buslaws once told us that the Japanese were never colonized. Their culture is intact and there’s no any other culture was seen to them. Before, the Japanese lived in the era where ninjas and emperors were the superiors. Still, they live with it and they really love their culture so much. But as moral isolationism is concern, they don’t have the right to judge other culture because they don’t even experience that certain culture.

Lessons Learned:

In this chapter, I learned that we don't have the right to judge other cultures because they all have their uniqueness and how they live in the past. We should love our own.

Integrative questions:

- What is moral isolationism?
- What is culture?
- What is your culture?
- Do you love your culture?
- What it is to be a one's new sword?

Chapter: Mary Midgley – Trying Out One's New Sword

1. What is "moral isolationism"?

- The view that people should not morally criticize cultures that they do not understand.

2. Explain the Japanese custom of tsujigiri. What questions does Midgley ask about this custom?

Tsujigiri is a Japanese samurai custom to try their new swords to any passerby to see if their sword is sharp enough to cut through a human body.

3. What is wrong with moral isolationism, according to Midgley?

Moral isolationism is the one stopping ourselves from judging correctly the other cultures because we did not really see and know what is in and about their culture.

4. What does Midgley think is the basis for criticizing other cultures?

-to prove it that it destroys the general moral teachings.

Discussion Questions:

1. Midgley says that Nietzsche is an immoralist. Is that an accurate and fair assessment of Nietzsche? Why or why not?

No. Because he still encourage moral reasoning.

2. Do you agree with Midgley's claim that the idea of separate and unmixed cultures is unreal? Explain your answer.

Yes because racial discrimination is present in all cultures and sectors of society.

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## ITETHIC

### Book Review 5

Book:

Contemporary Moral Problems by James E. White

Chapter:

John Stuart Mill – Utilitarianism

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Quote:

If I am asked, what I mean by difference of quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount there is but one possible answer.

Learning Expectation:

In this chapter, I expect to learn about:

- Utilitarianism
- What kind of people were there in utilitarianism?
- Who were the persons involved in utilitarianism?

Review:

Utilitarianism as Mill described was the greatest happiness principle holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. For me, to be happy doesn't mean that you need to have everything. Other people say that if you have a lot of money, you can be happy. If you have a lot of girls, you can be happy. If you have a lot of jewelries, you can be happy. But it proves me wrong. To be happy doesn't mean that you need to have these utilities. I found happiness when I accept Jesus as my Lord and Savior and choose to live my life for him.

What giving you pleasure is what utilitarian is all about. If it doesn't give you pleasure, then throw it out of your life. Before, I really don't like having hardships/difficulties in life. I want those would make my life easier. But as I grow old and become mature, I learned that as you grow old, the trials that you will encounter became tougher. It's how you choose to live your life.

Lessons Learned:

In this chapter, I learned that:

- Utilitarianism is all about pleasure.

- Jesus is the only way for true happiness.
- Life is not always giving pleasure to yourself. Sometimes, you should face difficulties to become a better person.

Integrative questions:

- What is utilitarianism?
- What is pleasure?
- What are hardships?
- Why do we have to face difficulties?
- Is Jesus is the only way?

Chapter: John Stuart Mill - Utilitarianism

1. State and explain the Principle of Utility. Show how it could be used to justify actions that are conventionally viewed as wrong, such as lying and stealing.

Are actions or behaviors which promotes happiness or pleasure but they produce unhappiness or pain.

2. How does Mill reply to the objection that Epicureanism is a doctrine worthy only of swine?

“if the sources of pleasure of a human being and a swine are the same, the rule of life which is good enough for the one would be good enough for the other.”

3. How does Mill distinguish between higher and lower pleasures?

-The higher pleasures in life all about intellect, imagination, and emotion while the lower pleasures are about sexual pleasures.

4. According to Mill, whose happiness must be considered?

Majority.

5. Carefully reconstruct Mill’s proof of the Principle of Utility.

“Happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as an end; all other things being only desirable as means to that end. An object is visible is that people actually see it, and so of the other sources of our experience.”

Discussion Questions:

1. Is happiness nothing more than pleasure, and the absence of pain? What do you think?

Happiness for me is not just pleasure but a gift but certainly you have to experience pain so that you could feel the happiness after.

2. Does Mill convince you that the so-called higher pleasures are better than the lower ones?

Yes because lower pleasures sometimes lead to forever grieves.

3. Mill says, "In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility." Is this true or not?

True. Jesus saves.

4. Many commentators have thought that Mill's proof of the Principle of Utility is defective. Do you agree? If so, then what mistake or mistakes does he make? Is there any way to reformulate the proof so that it is not defective?

Yes I agree because sometimes, right could be wrong and wrong could be right.

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## ITETHIC

### Book Review 6

Book:

Contemporary Moral Problems by James E. White

Chapter:

James Rachels – The Debate Over Utilitarianism

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Quote:

The utilitarian doctrine is that happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as an end; all other things being desirable as means to that end( John Stuart Mill, 1861)

Learning Expectation:

In this chapter, I expect to learn about:

- Utilitarianism: the other side
- What were the arguments of James Rachels
- What were his objections?
- Why he would waste his time to do this debate over utilitarianism?

Review:

“Actions are to be judged right or wrong solely in virtue of their consequences. Nothing else matters. Right actions are, simple, those that have the best consequences.” For me, judging what is right and what is wrong should have a basis. If you choose Christianity as a basis, then you should be able to judge on a Christian judgment. But if you choose other doctrines as your basis, you might be wondering why they are different. To give consequences must be base from this phrase, “is the end justifies the mean?” to be able to come up with a conclusion, you should think on the mean or where it came from. Judging accordingly is like judging with a basis and that basis should be universal.

Lessons learned:

In this chapter, I learned that:

- Before making a decision, you should have a basis.

- Utilities are not the only reason why we are living in this world.

Integrative questions:

- Why James Rachels make a debate?
- What is utilitarianism?
- What were his arguments about utilitarianism?
- What is universal?
- What is the basis?

1. Rachels says that classical utilitarianism can be summed up in three propositions. What are they?

Actions are judged right or wrong solely in virtue of their consequences, when we think about the consequence of our action after we judge it and thus making the right actions the greatest producers of balance of happiness over unhappiness, calculating the happiness and unhappiness that we felt after our action.

2. Explain the problem with hedonism. How do defenders of utilitarianism respond to this problem?

is a view that pleasure is happiness.

3. What are the objections about justice, rights, and promises?

Sometimes these 3 are not fair.

4. Distinguish between rule- and act- utilitarianism. How does rule-utilitarianism reply to the objections?

Rule Util. is actions conform in to the rules that will lead to greater good. While Act Utilitarianism on the other hand states that the right action is one that will give happiness to a person.

5. What is the third line of defense?

Act-Utilitarianism

Discussion Questions:

1. Smart's defense of utilitarianism is to reject common moral beliefs when they conflict with utilitarianism. Is this acceptable to you or not? Explain your answer

No because our moral beliefs are the true beliefs that will give you happiness.

2. A utilitarian is supposed to give moral consideration to all concerned. Who must be considered? What about nonhuman animals? How about lakes and streams?

They must consider everyone who is unaware of utilitarianism.

3. Rachels claims that merit should be given moral consideration independent of utility. Do you agree?

YES.

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## ITETHIC

### Book Review 7

Book:

Contemporary Moral Problems by James E. White

Chapter:

Immanuel Kant – The Categorical Imperative

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Quote:

It is impossible to conceive anything at all in the world, or even out of it, which can be taken as good without qualification, except good will.

Learning Expectation:

In this chapter, I expect to learn about:

- Immanuel Kant
- Categorical imperative
- Why he choose this to study?
- What were his reasons and debate about it?

Review:

“Kant believes that our moral duty can be formulated in one supreme rule, the categorical imperative, from which all our duties can be derived.” According to Kant, there should be one supreme rule for morality so that all of the people can go with it and live their lives with it.

Goodwill for me means that using your intelligence, wit, and judgments to be use as a key helper in doing something good for others. To be good doesn't mean that you should obey all the rules. Even though we obey it, there will come a time that you could disobey it. Being good means that living your life while obeying the rules. Goodwill is making other people happy despite the fact that you don't know them or maybe you're not close with them.

Categorical imperative for me is obeying a universal law and it's the word of God.

Lessons learned:

- I learned about categorical imperative
- I learned how to obey.

Integrative questions:

- What is categorical imperative?
- Who is Immanuel Kant?
- What is good will?
- What is good?
- How to be good?

1. Explain Kant's account of the good will

Kant's account of good will is all about doing good things to others and making them happy with good intentions. When your intention is bad but the way you do it is good then it is also bad.

2. Distinguish between hypothetical and categorical imperatives.

If you have a goal and you tend to succeed on it then it is hypothetical imperative and if you are doing things that you do not desire then it is categorical imperative.

3. State the first formulation of the categorical imperative (using the notion of a universe law), and explain how Kant uses this rule to derive some specific duties toward self and others.

The categorical imperative is said to have good effect on us if we just ourselves disengaged to the others' businesses.

4. State the second version of the categorical imperative (using the language of means and ends). And explain it.

The end does not justify the means. The worthiness of purpose does not make an evil act good.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Are the two versions of the categorical imperative just different expressions of one basic rule, or are they two different rules? Defend your view.

I can't really have sides on this matter for I am not that experienced to answer this question. I am not a philosopher nor an experienced one so I will not have the capacity to input ideas on this matter.

2. Kant claims that an action that is not done from the motive of duty has no moral worth. Do you agree or not? If not, give some counterexamples.

I AGREE.

3. Some commentators think that the categorical imperative (particularly the first formulation) can be used to justify nonmoral actions. Is this a good criticism?

I think it is a good criticism.

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## ITETHIC

### Book Review 8

Book:  
Contemporary Moral Problems by James E. White

Chapter:

Aristotle – Happiness and Virtue  
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Quote:

Our discussion will be adequate if it has as much clearness as the subject-matter admits of, for precision is not to be sought for alike in all discussions, any more than in all the products of the crafts.

Learning Expectation:

In this chapter, I expect to learn about:

- Happiness
- Virtue
- True happiness

Review:

Virtues are habitual and firm dispositions to do well. Happiness for me can be attained if you do something good to others and in that way, you will also feel happiness. Therefore, happiness and virtue are in a way linked to one another.

Happiness is a very broad word. Each and every one of us have had experience happiness and I think not even a single person could say that they did not experience happiness at one point. Though not all of us are on the same level when it comes to the happiness that we felt, we still can stay that we all have our happy moments whether it was childhood memories or a present one. We all have different definitions of happiness because we are all unique and can experience diverse set of happiness. Doing something for others without thinking of something in return will make you happy and contented. It is up to the person to find happiness and to be truly contented on her or his doings.

## Lessons Learned:

- Virtues
- Happiness

### Integrative questions

- What is happiness?
- What is virtue?
- What is true happiness?
- How can you be happy?
- What is genuine happiness?

1. What is happiness, according to Aristotle? How is it related to virtue? How is it related to pleasure?

Virtues as we all know are taught when we are young from our parents. With those virtues, we can realize happiness when those are applied and gained.

2. How does Aristotle explain moral virtue?

It is the happiness that a person seeks through his lifetime. A person can be happy when someone appreciates his/her worth.

3. Is it possible for everyone in our society to be happy, as Aristotle explains? If not, who cannot be happy?

In a way, everyone can be happy. People can be happy in different ways and in different views. There are some ups and downs in the life of a human being but it is impossible to be lonely for the rest of your life.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Aristotle characterizes a life of pleasure as suitable for beasts. But what, if anything, is wrong with a life of pleasure?

Man desires pleasure and with that we could be harmful if those pleasure are not gained.

2. Aristotle claims that the philosopher will be happier than anyone else. Why is this? Do you agree or not?

I would agree if he himself says so. I think philosophers are happy because they influence other people and in a way make them think and reflect on their lives.

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## ITETHIC

### Book Review 9

Book:

Contemporary Moral Problems by James E. White

Chapter:

Joel Feinberg – The Nature and Value of Rights

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Quote:

Try to imagine Nowheresville, a world very much like our own except that no one, or hardly anyone has rights.

Learning Expectation:

In this chapter, I expect to learn about:

- Nature
- Values
- Value of rights
- Rights

Review:

We say that having rights is a pleasure given to us so that we can experience justice. But we must think of it this way, “Great power comes with great responsibility”.

Yes, we are given rights in order to experience what it is to be given fairness and equality. But we must also realize that being given those rights, we have to be responsible of others as well. Protecting our rights means protecting the rights of others. Protecting our own rights is also important as well as others’ rights. Our duty is to be conscientious of our own rights and not to abuse it by any way possible. Those rights are given to us because it is our right to be treated as human beings therefore we are given equal and proper rights. Granted with those rights, we must be able to know our limitations.

Lessons Learned:

In this chapter, I learned about:

- The true value of rights
- Where did it come from

Integrative questions:

What is right?

What is the value of rights?

What is the nature of rights?

Do you have a right?

What are your rights?

**Review Questions:**

1. Describe Nowheresville. How is this world different from our world?

It is impossible for a person to have no rights.

2. Explain the doctrine of the logical correlativity of right and duties. What is Feinberg's position on this doctrine?

Each and every right are dependent to the rights of one another.

3. How does Feinberg explain the concept of personal desert? How would personal desert work in Nowheresville?

It is like giving the people what rights they deserve.

4. Explain the notion of a sovereign right-monopoly. How would this work in Nowheresville according to Feinberg?

Sovereign- right monopoly is the rights owned by the person. It would work but it will be very difficult to handle.

5. What are claim-rights? Why does Feinberg think they are morally important?

A **claim right** is a **right** one holds against another person or persons who owe a corresponding duty to the **right** holder. It is because there are positive and negative sides of this right.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Does Feinberg make a convincing case for the importance of rights? Why or why not?

No, it's very confusing.

2. Can you give a noncircular definition of claim-right?

When you are speaking in front of people and you are a celebrity. You are free to speak provided that you will not break any rules.

Arjay Orcasitas

## ITETHIC

### Book Review 10

Book:

Contemporary Moral Problems by James E. White

Chapter:

Ronald Dworkin - Taking Rights Seriously

Amazon Link:

[http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=pd\\_sim\\_b\\_2/185-6566170-6503008](http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=pd_sim_b_2/185-6566170-6503008)

Quote:

The constitution fuses legal and moral issues, by making the validity of a law depend on the answer to complex moral problems, like the problem of whether a particular statute respects the inherent equality of all men.

Learning Expectation:

In this chapter, I expect to learn about:

- Rights
- How to take rights seriously
- Ronald Dworkin

Review:

Living In a democratic country means that we are given rights to be experienced by the people. But to think of it, how many people in the Philippines are able to study and not? How many are those who know their rights and how many do not? Even some of the people who are studying do not know their rights and with that comes the problem itself.

If we want to live in such a peaceful place wherein people are given fairness and equality, we must know our own rights to experience it. Some of the people are doing stuffs for others when in fact they can do something about it and be against it. We all have to learn our rights to be able to have the benefit of our rights. Our rights are very important because with those, we are able to protect our well- being. Those are not mere displays and made just to say that we have our rights but it is given to us so that we can take care of our own dignity.

## Lessons Learned:

- Rights
- Serious Rights

## Integrative questions:

What is a democratic country?

What are the rights of the people?

What is right?

What is a law?

How to create a law?

1. What does Dworkin mean by right in the strong sense? What rights in this sense are protected by the U.S. Constitution?

I think the rights which are personal or rights that are must be experienced by people are the ones protected by the government.

2. Distinguish between legal and moral right. Give some example of legal rights that are not moral right, and moral right that are not legal rights.

Legal rights are based on the constitution while the moral rights are based on how people think.

3. What are the two models of how a government might define the rights of its citizens? Which does Dworkin find more attractive?

Dworkin favored the first one. The first one is about the demands of the society and the individual. The second is about political equality.

4. According to Dworkin, what two important ideas are behind the institution or rights?

The political and social rights are the important ideas behind the institution of rights.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Does a person have a right to break the law? Why or why not?

Morally speaking we have no right to break the law but I think there are certain exemptions. If breaking a law will save a life then it is acceptable and you must be able to face the consequences regarding your act.

2. Are rights in the strong sense compatible with Mill's utilitarianism?

Mill's utilitarianism is more on a one ruler basis while rights are given to the people so that they will be freer so I don't think it's not quite compatible.

3. Do you think that Kant would accept right in the strong sense or not?

It would most likely be accepted by Kant.

Arjay Orcasitas

## ITETHIC

### Book Review 11

Book:

Contemporary Moral Problems by James E. White

Chapter:

John Rawls – A Theory of Justice

Amazon Link:

[http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=pd\\_sim\\_b\\_2/185-6566170-6503008](http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=pd_sim_b_2/185-6566170-6503008)

Quote:

Thus we are to imagine that those who engage in social cooperation choose together, in one joint act, the principles which are to assign basic rights and duties and to determine the division of social benefits.

Learning Expectation:

In this chapter, I expect to learn about:

- Justice
- How justice obtain?
- What are laws to obtain justice?

Review:

Justice is the concept of moral rightness based on ethics, rationality, law, natural law, fairness and equity. For me, justice is supplying the truth and nothing but the truth. It based on how well the truth is. Sometimes or most of the times, the truth was covered by lies which superior people really do. But I know that God will reveal himself and punish those who live in lie. Moral rightness based on ethics for me is the right morality that based on ethics which is the basis of justice. Rationality is for equality. Law is for rules. Natural law is for the laws of nature and fairness and equity is like a blind folded woman who will judge a man.

Lessons Learned:

In this chapter I learned about:

- Justice

- Morality
- Ethics
- Rationality
- Laws
- Fairness and equity

Integrative questions:

- What is morality?
- What is ethics?
- What is rationality
- What is law
- What is equity?

### **Review Questions:**

1. Carefully explain Rawls's conception of the original position.

Rawl's concept of original position is all about our "veil of ignorance" the thinking of the world as fair and equal.

2. State and explain Rawls's first principle of justice.

it is all about the basic equal freedom of people.

3. State and explain the second principle. Which principle has priority such that it cannot be sacrificed?

It is all about the social and economic injustices.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. On the first principle, each person has an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty as long as this does not interfere with a similar liberty for others. What does this allow people to do? Does it mean, for example, that people have right to engage in homosexual activities as long as they don't interfere with others? Can people produce and view pornography if it does not restrict anyone's freedom? Are people allowed to take drugs in the privacy of their homes?

It is true that we are all given freedom but there is no absolute freedom. People have certain rules to follow even though they are free to choose what they want. They are responsible of their actions and I think doing what is morally right is more important.

2. Is it possible for free and rational persons in the original position to agree upon different principles than give by Rawls? For example, why wouldn't they agree to

an equal distribution of wealth and income rather than an unequal distribution?  
That is, why wouldn't they adopt socialism rather than capitalism? Isn't socialism just as rational as capitalism?

People have never ending wants and needs. Therefore, they would not be in favour of having equal wealth and will continue to find for more.

Arjay Orcasitas

## ITETHIC

### Book Review 12

Book:

Contemporary Moral Problems by James E. White

Chapter:

Annette Baier – The Need for More Than Justice

Amazon Link:

[http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=pd\\_sim\\_b\\_2/185-6566170-6503008](http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0495553204/ref=pd_sim_b_2/185-6566170-6503008)

Quote:

Let me say quite clearly at this early point that there is little disagreement that justice is a social value of very great importance, and injustice an evil.

Learning Expectation:

In this chapter, I expect to learn about:

- Justice
- More than justice

Review:

Justice is the moral uprightness on the foundation of principles, law, reason, innate law, sprite, and impartiality. However, justice is different in every different part of the world depending on their moral concepts. If somebody would ask me what justice means, I would answer “fairness” . Because for me justice is all about giving what is due.

Baier rejected ideologies and principles which she seemed not applicable and not attainable by mere human beings and modified the ones which are helpful. But in my point of view, justice cannot be fully attained in this world if we just keep on waiting to be given justice. We cannot deny the fact that there are people who are like that. Striving hard and persevering in their works but are not given due appreciation because they lack the ability to be proud of their own hard work and let other person be on top. I believe that justice can only be attained fully by acting to be recognized and be given justice. We just have to be aware of our own rights and not abuse what is given to us.

Lessons learned:

- Justice and why we need more than justice

Integrative questions:

What is justice?

Why do we need justice?

What is more than justice?

Is there something like less justice?

Who has the ability to judge?

Review Questions:

1. Distinguish between the justice and care perspectives. According to Gilligan, how do these perspectives develop?

The justice perspective is the thing that is given by the authorities like the government and all and the care perspective is the one the way given by our family, friends, relatives and the likes.

2. Kohlberg's theory of moral reasoning involved six stages through which each person passes in order, without skipping a stage or reversing their order. His theory states that not all people progress through all six stages..

3. Baier says there are three important differences between Kantian liberals and their critics. What are these differences?

The Kantian critics focused more about religion while the liberals focus more about freedom and the capacity of human beings to choose.

4. Why does Baier attack the Kantian view that the reason should control unruly passions?

I think that the reason why Baier attacked the Kantian view is because the latter contains inconsistency.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does Baier mean when she speaks of the need "to transvalue the values of our patriarchal past"? Do new values replace the old ones? If so, then do we abandon the old values of justice, freedom, and right?

People seem a lot more intelligent than those in the past. We are now capable of doing things that are morally right and we try to rationalize things before we do something. Unlike in the

past, their ways are out of date. We do not completely change our values in the past, we just modify our values of justice, freedom, and right so that our generations will be more capable of doing things that are morally right.

2. What is wrong with the Kantian view that extends equal rights to all rational beings, including women and minorities? What would Baier say? What do you think?

Rights are privileges granted to the people so that the world will be fair for all human beings it's just that what people do is sometimes abuse those rights.

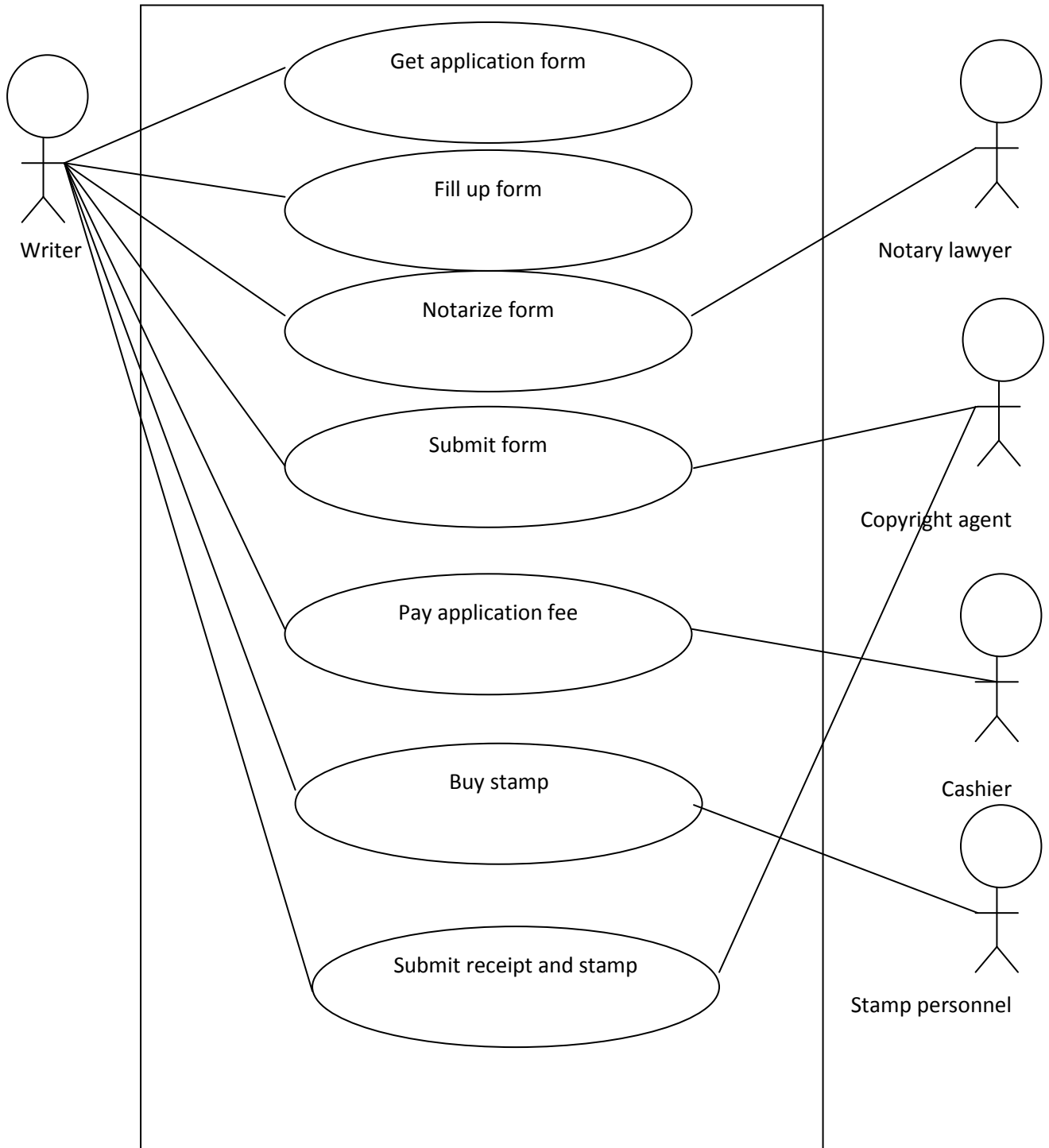
3. Baier seems to reject the Kantian emphasis on freedom of choice. Granted, we do not choose our parent, but still don't we have freedom of choice about many things, and isn't this very important?

With the freedom of choice, we have the capacity or the right to choose whatever path we will take provided that we will be responsible enough to face the consequences of those actions.

# Copyright Processes

(Use case, Narrative and activity diagram)

# Existing Use case diagram



**Title:** Copyright Process

**Description:** This diagram shows how a writer/publisher can apply for the copyright in the National Library

**Actors/s:** Writer/Publisher, Notary lawyer, Copyright agent, Cashier, Stamp personnel

**Creation Date:** Feb. 28, 2009

**Version:** 1.0

**Pre-condition:**

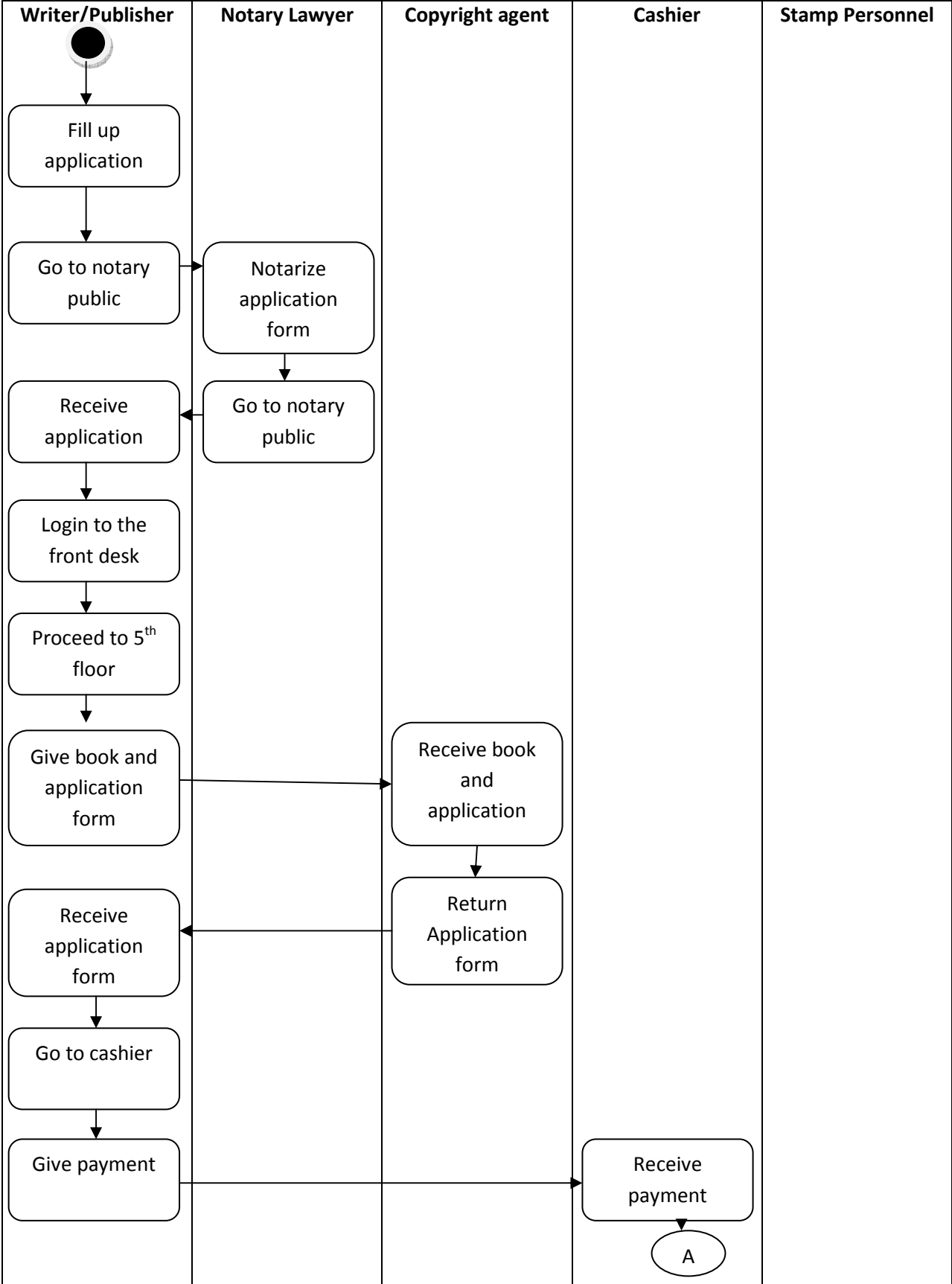
- the writer must download the application form in the website or go to the national library and ask for a copy.

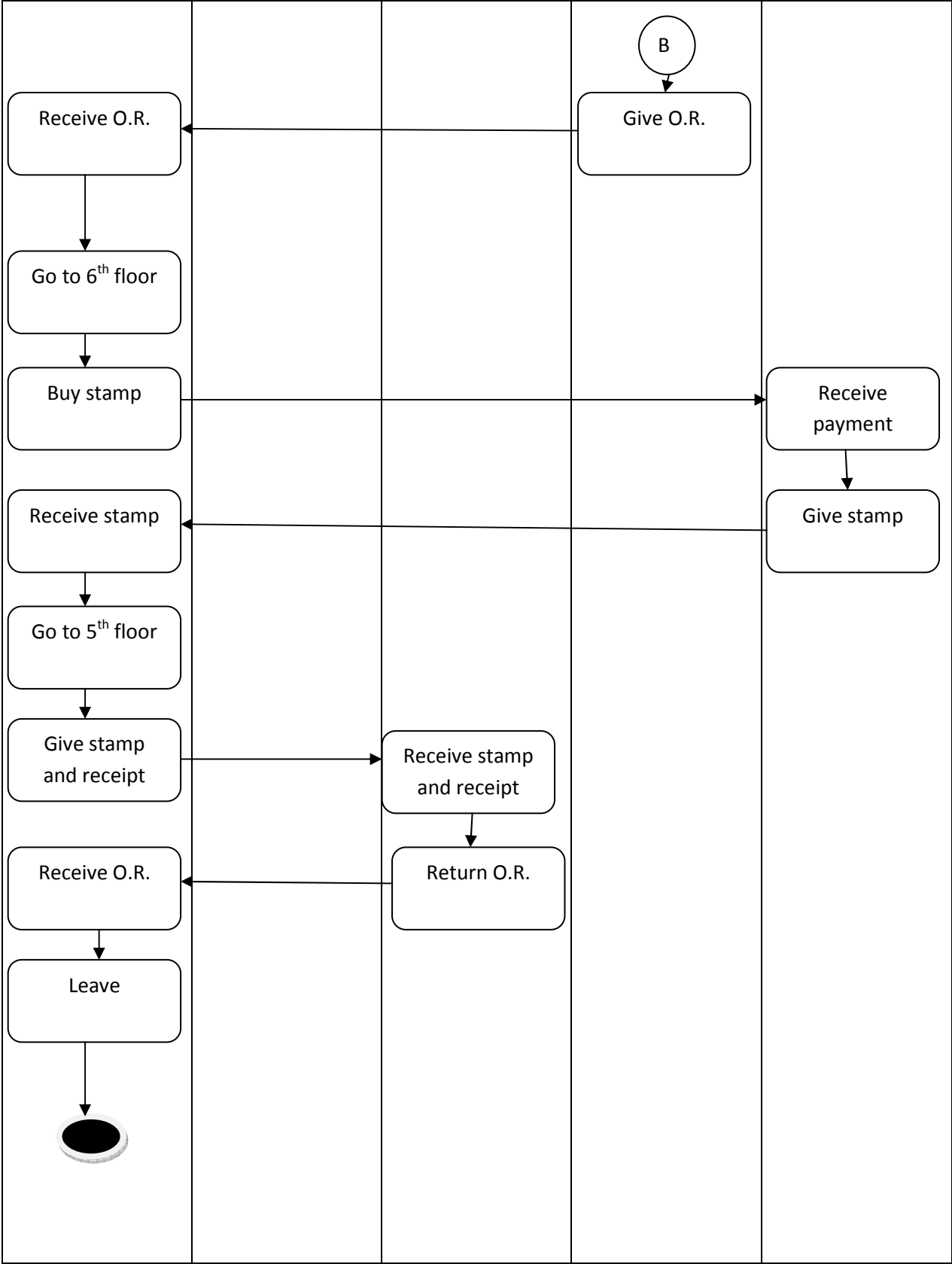
**Main Success Scenario:**

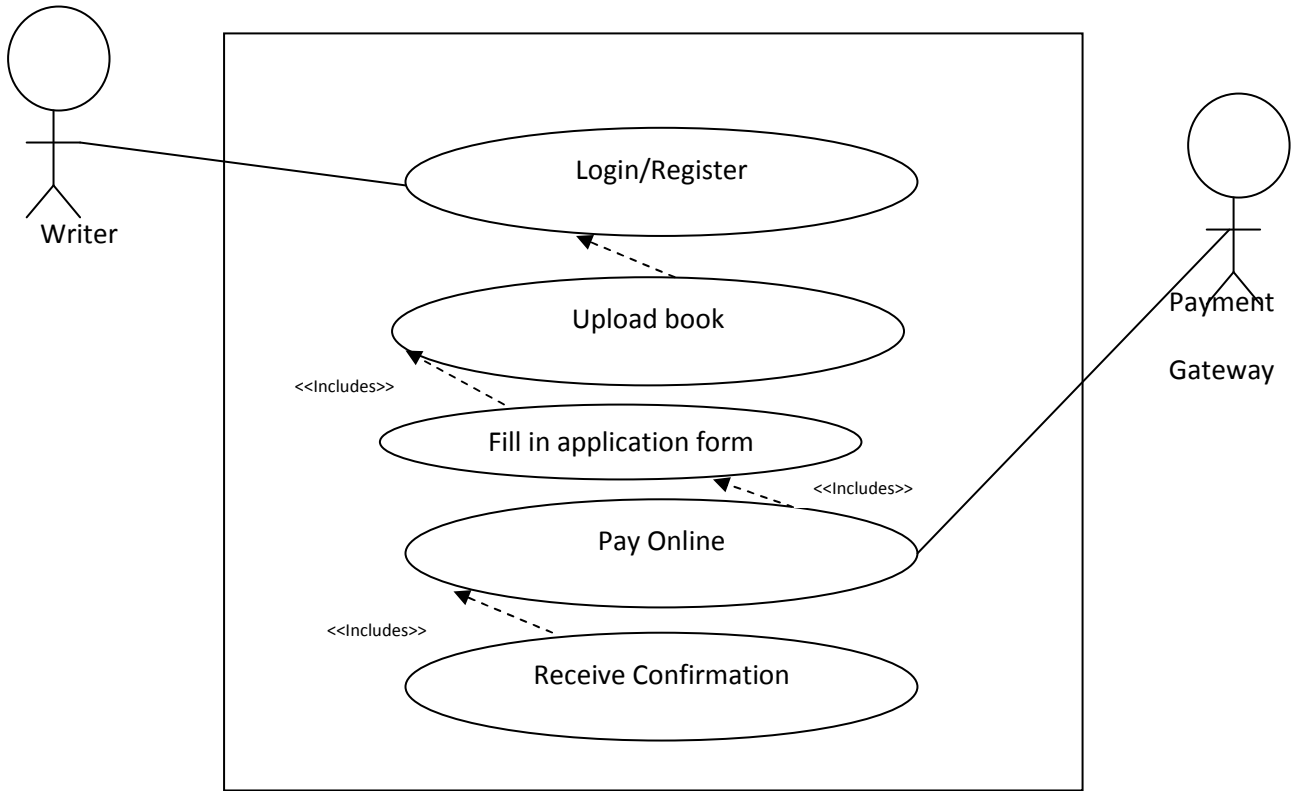
- The Writer successfully have the copyright of his book

**Alternative Sequence/s:**

- The writer has to go back to the library because of incomplete requirements.







**Title:** Online Copyright System

**Description:** This diagram shows how a writer/publisher can apply for the copyright online

**Actors/s:** Writer/Publisher Payment Gateway

**Creation Date:** Feb. 28, 2009

**Version:** 1.0

**Pre-condition:**

- The writer/publisher must register and fill up the application form online
- 

**Main Success Scenario:**

- The Writer successfully have the copyright of his book

**Alternative Sequence/s:**

- The writer do the process manually via the national library

**Error Sequence/s:**

- The writer doesn't have enough funds in the bank

